

**Continuity and Change:
Chen Yingzhen's Fiction and the May Fourth Literary Tradition**

by

CISSY SZE SZE YEE

B.F.A. York University, Canada, 1993

B.A. The University of British Columbia, Canada, 2002

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

(Department of Asian Studies)

We accept this thesis as conforming to the required standard.

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

April 2004

© Cissy Sze Sze Yee, 2004

Library Authorization

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the head of my department or by his or her representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

CISSY SZE SZE YEE

Name of Author (please print)

21/04/2004

Date (dd/mm/yyyy)

Title of Thesis: CONTINUITY AND CHANGE : CHEN YINGZHEN'S
FICTION AND THE MAY FOURTH LITERARY TRADITION

Degree: MASTER OF ARTS Year: 2004

Department of ASIAN STUDIES
The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, BC Canada

Abstract

The separation of Mainland China and Taiwan may be seen as a tragedy in the history of modern China. Taiwan, under the fifty years' colonial rule of Japan and the authoritarian rule of the Nationalist government for over thirty years, has been cut off from China politically and culturally since 1895. Over the years, however, there have been writers in Taiwan who struggle to search for their Chinese cultural roots and attempt to break this political gap. Chen Yingzhen 陳映真 (1936—), an ethnic Taiwanese writer who spent most of his lifetime in Taiwan, is one of them.

This thesis analyses twenty stories written by Chen Yingzhen from 1960 to 2001. It aims at showing that Chen Yingzhen's fiction not only inherits the core spirit of the May Fourth literary tradition that emerged in Mainland China in 1917, but it also makes a creative transformation of that tradition. In other words, Chen Yingzhen's fiction reveals both a *continuity* and *change* of the May Fourth literary tradition.

My analysis begins with the historical background of the May Fourth literary tradition and its transmission in Taiwan, which is followed by a brief introduction of Chen Yingzhen's background with emphasis on his pursuit of Lu Xun's literary spirit. Chapter three discusses Chen Yingzhen's "obsession with China"—the May Fourth core spirit that continues to permeate Chen Yingzhen's fiction. Chapter four examines Chen Yingzhen's attitude towards Chinese and Western culture, which marks a significant change from the May Fourth literary tradition. Chapter five is an analysis of Chen Yingzhen's formal techniques. Within the framework of realism, the writing style that dominated May Fourth literature, Chen Yingzhen makes creative changes by telling his stories in innovative ways. In this thesis, I hope to show that Chen Yingzhen's fiction fills in the cultural gap between

Mainland China and Taiwan. His fiction embodies a vision that crosses the boundary of time and space, and tells us that although Taiwanese and Mainlander are divided politically, they still share the same cultural roots.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	ii
Table of Contents.....	iv
Acknowledgements.....	v
CHAPTER 1:	
The May Fourth Literary Tradition and Its Transmission in Taiwan.....	1
CHAPTER 2:	
About Chen Yingzhen	17
CHAPTER 3: CONTINUITY	
Chen Yingzhen's Obsession With China.....	27
CHAPTER 4: CHANGE	
Chen Yingzhen's Attitude Towards Western and Chinese Culture.....	56
CHAPTER 5: CHANGE WITHIN CONTINUITY	
Formal Techniques.....	86
CONCLUSION:	
Chen Yingzhen's Fiction and the May Fourth Literary Tradition.....	109
WORKS CITED.....	114

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Michael S. Duke, for his patient guidance, insightful advice, and more importantly, his kindness and encouragement. His recommendation on books that I should read has been a great help to me throughout the process of my study.

I also want to express my profound gratitude to Josephine Chiu-Duke, who taught me how to appreciate modern Chinese literature and classical Chinese philosophical text over the two years of my undergraduate studies in UBC.

Thanks also go to Professor Jerry Schmidt, who critically corrected my thesis and inspired me greatly with his knowledge and love of classical Chinese poems. Special thanks to Professor Laurence Preston for his valuable advice and patience in reading the whole draft of my thesis.

Lastly, I would like to say thank you to my husband Tak Chan for his endless support.

Chapter 1

The May Fourth Literary Tradition and Its Transmission in Taiwan

The May Fourth New Literature Movement, which began in China in 1917 with the publication of Hu Shi's 胡適 article "Some Tentative Suggestions for the Reform of Chinese Literature" 文學改良芻議 in the leading intellectual journal *New Youth* 新青年, marked the beginning of the "modern" phase of Chinese literature.¹ The impact of this literary revolution was both extensive and deep. It swept across the nation and thoroughly changed the literary outlook of the Chinese intellectuals. Taiwan, an island formally ruled by China but ceded to Japan in 1895 at the conclusion of the Sino-Japanese War, was not immune to the influence of this literary movement. Some Chinese intellectuals in Taiwan were deeply inspired by the May Fourth intellectuals and endeavored to rejuvenate the literary scene in Taiwan by introducing the May Fourth literary tradition to the island. It is my intention in this chapter to delineate, firstly, the main characteristics of the May Fourth literary tradition and, secondly, the transmission of this tradition in Taiwan. This analysis will provide us with a background to understanding the link between Chen Yingzhen's 陳映真 (1936—) literary works and the May Fourth Literary tradition.

The May Fourth Literary Tradition

The new literature produced in the May Fourth era differed from the old Chinese literary tradition in both *form* and *content*. Among the eight literary principles drafted by Hu Shi in his letter to Chen Duxiu 陳獨秀—another major advocate of the new literary

¹ Hu Shi's article appeared in both the January 1917 issue of *New Youth* and the March issue of *The Chinese Students' Quarterly* (*liu Mei xuesheng jipao* 留美學生季報), a magazine in Chinese printed in Shanghai by the

movement—in October 1916, the first five principles concerned the form and the last three focused on the content of the new literature.² The three principles written by Chen Duxiu in his article “On the Literary Revolution” 文學革命論 even suggested a “revolution” rather than “reform” in both literary form and content.³

In terms of the new literary form, both Hu Shi and Chen Duxiu boldly declared that the traditional literary language, *wenyan* 文言, was a “dead” language and *baihua* 白話, the vernacular language, was the only fit medium for the creation of a living Chinese literature. In both Hu’s and Chen’s views, *wenyan* had to be replaced by *baihua* in literary creation for two reasons. First, the *wenyan* language was not a common language known and used by the populace. If the new literature was to become a medium to inform and educate the public with new ideas, the continuous adoption of *wenyan* would hinder this communication process.

Chinese Students’ Alliance in the United States and with Hu Shi as its editor-in-chief at the time (Chow 274).

² The eight principles, also called the “eight-don’ts-ism” 八不主義 are as below:

1. Avoid the use of classical allusions;
2. Discard stale, time-worn literary phrases;
3. Discard the parallel construction of sentences;
4. Do not avoid using vernacular words and speech;
5. Follow literary grammar;
6. Do not write that you are sick or sad when you do not feel sick or sad;
7. Do not imitate the writings of the ancients; what you write should reflect your own personality;
8. What you write should have meaning or real substance. (Chow 274)

³ The article was published in the February 1917 issue of *New Youth*. The three principles suggested by Chen Duxiu are:

1. To overthrow the painted, powdered, and obsequious literature of the aristocratic few, and to create the plain, simple, and expressive literature of the people;
2. To overthrow the stereotyped and over-ornamental literature of classicism, and to create the fresh and sincere literature of realism;
3. To overthrow the pedantic, unintelligible, and obscurantist literature of the hermit and recluse, and to

Second, Hu Shi's vast knowledge of the literary tradition from China and the West convinced him that the use of the vernacular language in literature was a natural result of any cultural renaissance. Hu observed that during the Yuan dynasty the trend towards the identification between the written and spoken language reached a peak in China. If this trend had not been replaced by the regressive practices of the "eight-legged essay" and the restoration of the ancient style since the Ming, Chinese literature would have developed into a vernacular literature of the spoken language—"a phenomenon which Hu Shi compared to Italian literature since Dante, English literature since Chaucer, and German literature since Luther" (Lee, "Literary Trends" 467). Although the revolutionary view of adopting the vernacular as literary language was opposed by some literati,⁴ Chen Duxiu asserted that this principle was "obviously right, and there [was] no room for discussion by opponents" (quoted in Chow 277).

Besides the adoption of the vernacular language, Chen Duxiu also advocated "realism" as the most suitable literary form for the new literature. In his article "A Discussion of the History of Modern European Literature,"⁵ Chen pointed out that European literature from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century went through a *progressive* evolution from classicism, romanticism, and realism to naturalism as Europe gradually entered the enlightened era. Chen stated that "Chinese literature still remains in the stage of classicism and romanticism. Hereafter it will tend to realism" (quoted in Chow 273). He advocated

create the plain-speaking and popular literature of society in general. (Chow 276)

⁴ The opponents included two groups: the old Confucian conservatives, such as Lin Shu 林紓 and Yan Fu 嚴復, and a group of Western-educated professors who established the *Critical Review* (*Xue Heng* 學衡), such as Wu Mi 吳宓, Mei Guangdi 梅光迪 and Hu Xiansu 胡先驕 (Chow 279-282).

realism in China instead of naturalism because “he feared that the bold description of explicit, painful, and ugly details of society and life by the naturalistic writers might not be accepted by contemporary Orientals” (Chow 273). However, Leo Ou-fan Lee notes that the May Fourth intellectual’s commitment to realism actually gave rise to a great deal of “interpretive confusion” (“Literary Trends” 493). The principle of realism was never intended by its May Fourth advocates as a “pure canon of artistic theory which decrees a particular approach to literary creation or analysis” (494). The “realistic” literature produced in the early 1920s yielded not so much an objective representation of reality as “reality refracted through a very subjective consciousness” (494). However, in the 1930s, realism was no longer “subjective” and “romantic.” The literature produced in the 1930s illustrated a strong tendency towards “social realism” and “critical realism,” which embraced the larger reality in the revelation of the dark side of urban and rural life (495).

In terms of content, C.T. Hsia notes that the May Fourth literature’s most distinguishing characteristic is its “burden of moral contemplation: its obsessive concern with China as a nation afflicted with a spiritual disease and therefore unable to strengthen itself or change its set ways of inhumanity” (533-34). Being preoccupied with this moral burden, many May Fourth writers embarked on their artistic career with the patriotic mission of saving China. Writers like Lu Xun, Lao She and Mao Dun all strove to expose the ills of society through their literary works, hoping that the consciousness of its people would be awakened and the society could be changed. As China’s plight grew deeper, the writer’s reformist urge grew stronger. However, in C.T. Hsia’s view, this patriotic mission had somehow limited the artistic vision of the writers and it “inevitably [led] to a patriotic

⁵ The article was published in the November 1915 issue of *New Youth* (Chow 272).

didacticism” which produced the “extremely shallow characters of the early romanticism” (21).

The May Fourth writers’ pragmatic view towards literature was also reflected in their attitude towards foreign literature. When exposed to a wide range of foreign literature, the May Fourth writers, being obsessed with China’s fate, were drawn more to the ideology than the artistic side of the work. As a result, most writers at that time did not approach Japanese literature for its intrinsic value. Many of them tended to believe that Japanese literature was nothing more than an imitation of the West. Thus, Japanese literature provided them with a shortcut to imitate the West. The Chinese scholar Liang Qichao 梁啟超 was eager to find in the Japanese political fiction the secret of Japan’s way to wealth and power. Few were like Zhou Zuoren 周作人 who maintained a genuine interest in Japanese literature for its own sake. Apparently, the most fundamental question the May Fourth writers asked was not ‘What is literature?’ but ‘What is its use?’ (Cheng 76). This phenomenon was also observed by Benjamin Schwartz in his studies of the life and work of Yan Fu 嚴復 (1853-1921), whose formidable translation project of western philosophies earned him the infamous reputation of “all-out Westernizer” in his times. But Schwartz observed that Yan Fu’s commentaries and his distorted translation of the original ideas betrayed his central concern of seeking wealth and power for China, which was indeed an indication of Yan’s obsession with China.⁶

Being deeply burdened with their social responsibilities, the May Fourth writers

⁶ The western philosophies which were translated into classical Chinese by Yan Fu included Spencer’s *A Study of Sociology*, Huxley’s *Evolution and Ethics*, Adam Smith’s *The Wealth of Nations*, Mill’s *On Liberty and Logic*,

were eager to find an explanation and solution to China's plight. They began to see that the two thousand years of the Confucian tradition was the main force that controlled nearly every aspect of Chinese life. If China was to be saved, they believed, this tradition and all it stood for had to be eliminated. Lin Yüsheng described this phenomenon as "totalistic iconoclasm" (6). The May Fourth intellectuals perceived the Chinese tradition as an organismic whole and believed that "the task of rejuvenating a corrupt and atrophied China involved nothing less than *complete* transformation of the traditional Chinese world view and *total* reconstruction of the traditional Chinese mentality" (26). In Lin's view, these intellectuals were apparently "anti-traditionalist," but the "cultural-intellectualistic" approach adopted by them in face of social problems indeed originated from a traditional Chinese mode of thinking.⁷

This dilemma is best illustrated in Lu Xun's life and work. Lu Xun's "Diary of a Madman" 狂人日記 is the first May Fourth literary work which takes up the "totalistic iconoclasm" stance.⁸ In the story, the protagonist—the mad man—looks up the historical records of China and sees that they are filled with "Confucian virtue and morality." As the protagonist continues his reading, he begins to see only two words between the lines: "eat people" (Lu 15). Lu Xun's totalistic iconoclasm is illustrated in this story by portraying China as a land of man-eaters. This anti-traditionalist outlook continues to appear in Lu Xun's other major work, "The True Story of Ah Q" 阿 Q 正傳. Through Ah Q's mentality and behavior, Lu Xun portrays the fundamental characteristics of Chinese people in the most negative way.

Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws*, and Jenks' *History of Politics*.

⁷ The "cultural-intellectualistic" approach, in Lin Yüsheng's words, is "a presupposition about the way to approach problems of social and political change that stresses the necessary priority of intellectual and cultural change" (27).

In Lu Xun's view, traditional Chinese people by and large resemble Ah Q's character: vile, cowardly, cunning, megalomaniac, and most importantly, lacking an interior self (Lin 129). However, Lin Yüsheng notes that in Lu Xun's other story, "In the Tavern" 在酒樓上, Lu Xun's commitment to the Confucian virtue of *nianjiu* 念舊 was implicitly expressed through the characterization of Lü Weifu.⁹ This story allows us to glimpse at the psychological tension that existed within Lu Xun: his rational consideration led him to reject Chinese tradition in a totalistic manner, but his love for Chinese culture always reminded him of something meaningful in traditional Chinese culture and morals (Lin 105).

Besides the "obsession with China" and "totalistic iconoclasm," May Fourth literature was also characterized by the writer's "obsession with self," a phenomenon pointed out by both Leo Ou-fan Lee and Jaroslav Prusek. In the 1920s, the formation of the two major literary groups—The Association for Literary Studies 文學研究社 and the Creation Society 創造社—created a new literary scene. But a series of ideological argument between "art for life's sake" and "art for art's sake" also emerged.¹⁰ However, in both Leo Ou-fan Lee's and

⁸ "Diary of a Madman" was first published in the May 1918 issue of *New Youth*.

⁹ In the story, Lü Weifu meets the narrator and tells him of two episodes that happened in his recent life—the reinterment of a much-loved younger brother and a visit to the daughter of a former neighbor, both done in fulfillment of the expressed wishes of Lü's mother. Lin Yüsheng notes that the conversation between Lü Weifu and the narrator may be considered as "a dialogue which takes place in the mind of Lu Xun himself" (Lin 144).

¹⁰ The Association for Literary Studies was officially founded in January 1921 in Beijing, with Lu Xun, Zhou Zuoren, Ye Shaojun 葉紹鈞, Mao Dun 茅盾, Zheng Zhenduo 鄭振鐸 as major members. Under the influence of Zhou Zuoren and Mao Dun, the Association at the beginning advocated a "literature of humanity." But the idea of "humanity" was vague. Mao Dun later explained that "the writer's revelation of humanity must be the life of all mankind" and accepted the Western idea that "literature is the reflection of life" or "the mirror of society." The Creation Society was founded in the summer of 1921 in Shanghai. Major members included Guo Moruo 郭沫若, Yu Dafu 郁達夫, Zhang Ziping 張資平, Cheng Fangwu 成仿吾, and Tian Han 田漢. The slogan of this

Jaroslav Prusek's views, these seemingly antagonistic slogans were actually two sides of a coin. Whether the writers emphasized society or self in their writings, the critical vision remained intensely *subjective* in both groups. In his examination of the "romantic" nature of the May Fourth generation, Lee states that "the May Fourth movement had unleashed not only a literary and an intellectual revolution; it had also propelled an *emotional* one" (*Romantic Generation* 265). Prusek, in *The Lyrical and the Epic*, calls this intense emotion existing in Chinese literature "subjectivism and individualism." Early in 1926, this tendency was already noticed by scholar Liang Shiqiu 梁實秋. In his article "The Romantic Tendencies in Modern Chinese Literature" 現代中國文學之浪漫的趨勢, Liang stated that "emotion, at this time, is like a fierce tiger let loose from an iron cage that not only breaks open the shackles of convention but also crushes reason which controls emotion" (quoted in Lee, *Romantic Generation* 258). This emotional reaction towards both society and self had governed the development of the new literature throughout the whole May Fourth era.

Transmission of the May Fourth Tradition in Taiwan

From 1895 to 1945, Taiwan underwent its fifty years' history of Japanese colonial rule. Cut off from its motherland China, Taiwan remained a cultural backwater in the first two decades of its colonial history. Chinese intellectuals in Taiwan clung to the classical tradition of literary expression until a new strand of "modern" Taiwanese literature began to emerge in the early 1920s. This process of breakthrough was commonly referred to as the Taiwanese New Literature Movement (*Taiwan xinwenxue yundong* 台灣新文學運動), which was often seen as "an heir to the literary and spiritual legacies of the May Fourth Movement" (Lau,

society was "creative writing" and "art for art's sake." They emphasized the development of the self, the

“Echoes” 136). Like the May Fourth New Literature Movement, the Taiwanese New Literature Movement also started as part of a larger cultural reform. In 1920, three years after Hu Shi’s article “Some Tentative Suggestions for the Reform of Chinese Literature” was published in *New Youth*, a group of Taiwanese students in Tokyo founded *Taiwan Youth* 台灣青年,¹¹ a monthly journal published in Japanese with a purpose of “raising national consciousness, reforming social manners, and resisting the totalitarianism of the Japanese colonial government in Taiwan” (quoted in Lau, “Echoes” 136). Although written in Japanese, the “consciousness” that the Taiwanese intellectuals advocated was apparently “Chinese.” They called for Taiwanese youth’s political awareness, Chinese consciousness, and moral responsibilities. The patriotic and intellectual spirit these Taiwanese intellectuals displayed was analogous to the May Fourth youths’ “obsession with China.”

As observed by Yvonne Chang, “at the initial stage, terms of literary reform in the Taiwanese New Literature Movement nearly copied those of its slightly earlier Chinese counterpart” (“Taiwanese New Literature” 265). Zhang Wojun 張我軍 (1902-55), a Taiwanese student who studied in Beijing Normal University during the May Fourth Era and

unrestricted expression of emotion and freedom of organization (Chow 283-86).

¹¹ *Taiwan Youth* 台灣青年 was published by two newly established organizations in Japan—the New People Association 新民會 organized by Taiwanese expatriates in Tokyo, and a student-based Taiwanese Youth Association 台灣青年會. This journal became a medium for the Taiwanese to voice their critical views towards current affairs in Taiwan. The zeal for cultural reform soon spread from Tokyo to Taiwan, and carried on by the newly established Taiwanese Cultural Association 台灣文化協會, which remained as the main impetus of political and social reform until its split into right and left factions in 1927. In 1922, *Taiwan Youth* was re-named *Taiwan* 台灣, and became the official journal representing the Taiwanese Cultural Association. In April 1923, the Chinese language section of *Taiwan* became a separate publication, the semi-monthly *Taiwan minbao* 台灣民報, which was later called *Taiwan xinminbao* 台灣新民報 in 1930. This journal remained as the major

visited Lu Xun in 1926,¹² was the first Taiwanese intellectual who brought Hu Shi's new literary concept—the “eight-don'ts-ism” 八不主義—from Beijing to Taiwan and initiated the heated New Versus Old Literary Debate 新舊文學論戰.¹³ In a series of articles including “The Terrible State of the Taiwan Literary Scene” 糟糕的台灣文學界,¹⁴ “Weeping for the Literary Scene on Taiwan” 為台灣文學一哭,¹⁵ and “Please Help Dismantle This Old Tumble-down House in the Thicket of Weeds” 請合力拆下這座敗草穢中的破舊殿堂,¹⁶ Zhang wrote in a rhetoric reminiscent of Lu Xun,¹⁷ and saw his task as similar to Lu

journal representing the voice of the Taiwanese New Literature Movement (Ye, *Historical Outline* 20-30).

¹² In an essay written by Lu Xun in 1927, he recalled his meeting with Zhang Wojun in Beijing in 1926. Lu Xun remembered that Zhang gave him four copies of *Taiwan minbao*, and said to him, “Chinese people seem to have forgotten Taiwan, no one even bothers to mention it now” 中國人似乎都忘記了台灣了，誰也不大提起。Lu Xun replied to him, “No! Not really. It is because our country is too ruined, too many problems are arising within and without, to such an extent that we cannot take care of others' problem except our own” 不！那倒不至於的，只因為本國太破爛，內憂外患，非常之多，自顧不暇了，所以只能將這些事情暫且放下 (Ye, *Towards Taiwanese Literature* 76).

¹³ Prior to Zhang Wojun, articles advocating the adoption of the vernacular as literary language had already appeared. But these articles did not mention Hu Shi's “Some Tentative Suggestions for the Reform of Chinese Literature” or Chen Duxiu's “On the Literary Revolution.” These articles included Huang Chengcong's 黃呈聰 “On the New Mission of Universalizing the Vernacular Language” 論普及白話文的新使命, Huang Chaoqin's 黃朝琴 “On Revising the Chinese Language” 漢文改革論, Chen Xin's 陳炯 “Literature and Responsibilities” 文學與職務, Gan Wenfang's 甘文芳 “The Real Society and Literature” 實社會與文學, Chen Duanming's 陳端明 “On Advocating the Vernacular Language” 日用文鼓吹論, and Xu Naichang's 許乃昌 “The Past, Present and Future of the Chinese New Literature Movement” 中國新文學運動的過去現在和將來 (Ye, *Towards Taiwanese Literature* 69).

¹⁴ Published in the November 1924 issue of *Taiwan minbao*.

¹⁵ Published in the December 1924 issue of *Taiwan minbao*.

¹⁶ Published in the January 1925 issue of *Taiwan minbao*.

¹⁷ In Zhang Wojun's article “Please Help Dismantle This Old Tumble-down House in the Thicket of Weeds,” he wrote that his role was to awaken “our beloved brothers and sisters who haven't awoken and who still remain [in the tumble-down house] coveting their dreams, in danger of being crushed under its weight” 親愛的兄弟姊妹

Xun's—to awaken the soul of his country people who still remained soundly asleep. Although Taiwan was separated from the motherland, Zhang insisted that Taiwanese literature was in nature “a branch of China's literature, and it should be affected as the mainstream changes course” (Ye, *Towards Taiwanese Literature* 72). Like his May Fourth precursors, Zhang fiercely denounced the Chinese cultural heritage, and rigorously attacked the traditional Chinese poets in Taiwan who were still attached to the old writing manner, producing works that were hackneyed, insincere, and ineffectual for the modernization of Taiwan. The harsh way he reproached the traditional poets was “reminiscent of the radical Chinese reformist Chen Duxiu” (Chang, “Taiwanese New Literature” 266).

Throughout the decade of the 1920s, creative works by the May Fourth writers, such as Lu Xun, Hu Shi, Kuo Moruo 郭沫若, Xu Zhimo 徐志摩, and Bing Xin 冰心 were reprinted in Taiwanese journals and served as literary models.¹⁸ While Zhang Wojun strove to introduce and defend the May Fourth new literary concept in Taiwan, other Taiwanese intellectuals began to experiment with these new concepts in actual literary writings. Lai He

還不知醒過來，還要在那裏貪夢，就有被其所壓的危險了！Zhang therefore “wanted to take the lead in awakening the people inside and inviting them to help tear down the old tumble-down house” 欲率先叫醒其那裏頭的人們，並請他們和我合力拆下這所破舊的殿堂 (Yang 76). These words were reminiscent of Lu Xun's analogy of the “iron house” that he had written in the preface to his anthology *The Outcry* 吶喊.

¹⁸ The creative works from China were mostly reprinted in *Taiwan minbao*. These works included Hu Shi's “The Marriage” 終身大事 (written in 1919, reprinted in 1923), Bing Xin's “The Loner” 超人 (reprinted in 1925), Kuo Moruo's “Sorrowful Words of a Shepherd” 牧羊哀話 (reprinted in 1925), Xu Zhimo's “Self-dissection” 自剖 (written in 1926, reprinted in 1926), Lu Xun's “The Comedy of Ducks” 鴨的喜劇 (written in 1922, reprinted in 1925), “My Old Home” 故鄉 (written in 1921, reprinted in 1925), “Diary of a Madman” 狂人日記 (written in 1918, reprinted in 1925), and “The True Story of Ah Q” 阿Q正傳 (written in 1921, reprinted in 1925) (Yang 66-68).

賴和 (1894-1943),¹⁹ often called the “father of the Taiwanese New Literature,” emerged in the mid-twenties as a major creative writer. In 1918, Lai He, at the age of twenty-four, went to China to work in a hospital in Amoy. His stay in China coincided with the May Fourth Movement, which affected him greatly. Returning to Taiwan in 1919, he became involved in the social and political movements of the 1920s (Yang 95). Similar to the role played by Lu Xun in China, Lai He was the first vernacular fiction writer in Taiwan. In fact, many critics had remarked that Lai He’s work was influenced by the May Fourth period writings, especially Lu Xun’s (Yang 124).

As an inheritor of the May Fourth literary spirit, Lai He wrote with a central concern for social justice and the welfare of the common people. He believed, as expressed in an article in *Taiwan minbao* 台灣民報 in 1926, that “literature was a miniature representation of society” 文學就是社會的縮影. What the new literature should deal with were unresolved problems facing society (Yang 123). Lai He’s literary attitude was analogous to the “literature for humanity’s sake” or “art for life’s sake” principle upheld by the Association for Literary Studies in China, with Zhou Zuoren and Mao Dun as the major advocates.

The May Fourth literary movement started out with “romantic realism” in the 1920s with an emphasis on the emancipation of individual spirit. Then it gradually turned into “social realism” in the 1930s with a stress on the emancipation of the proletarian class. Lai He’s vernacular fiction, however, was written in the social realist manner right from the very beginning (Yang 96). With a passionate love for his countryfolk, Lai He aimed at exposing social illness and revealing the desperate situation of the “little people” in his writings. To Lai

¹⁹ Lai He’s real name is Lai He 賴河. He also used another pen-name Lan Yun 懶雲 (Yang 95).

He, as noticed by Jane Parish Yang, “form was less important than content. What mattered in a story was its exposé of suffering and inequality, speaking out on behalf of the hapless victims of cruelty and oppression” (107). Lai He’s literary style characterized the literary trend in Taiwan from almost the very beginning in the mid-1920s, and to be carried on throughout the whole decade of the 1930s.

The socio-political concern and moral burden exemplified in Lai He’s literature continued to prevail in the works of his successors, such as Yang Kui 楊逵 (1905-1985), Wu Zhuoliu 吳濁流 (1900-1976), Lu Heruo 呂赫若 (1914-1947), and Zhang Wenhuan 張文環 (1909-1978). The flourishing growth of the May Fourth literary seed was, however, thwarted in 1937, as an intensive Japanization policy 皇民化 was implemented in Taiwan. Chinese-language sections in newspapers and magazines were completely banned after the Sino-Japanese war had broken out.²⁰ However, the change of political climate did not put an end to the development of the new literature in Taiwan. As Yvonne Chang has observed, the second-generation Taiwanese New Literature writers “began to directly confront oppressive relationships within the colonial structure” (“Taiwanese New Literature” 272). This phenomenon was demonstrated in the opposed manner of two literary journals at that time. As opposed to the exquisite aestheticism and romanticism of the propagandistic journal *Literary Taiwan* 文藝台灣 published by the Japanese colonial government, a group of

²⁰ The Japanization policy was implemented by Governor-General Kobayashi. The belief was that only when the Taiwanese became fully assimilated subjects, could they be expected to become committed both in mind and spirit to Japan’s war effort and nationalistic aspiration. The policies included the removal of Chinese learning from the elementary school curriculum, the full implementation of the national language (Japanese) program, the name-changing campaign, and the “model national language families” campaign (Lamley 240).

second-generation Chinese writers published another journal, namely *Taiwanese Literature* 台灣文學, and privileged realism.²¹ Yang Kui, as a member of this Chinese group, adhered to the more leftist ideology in his criticisms of class exploitation and imperialism. Other second-generation Taiwanese writers depicted the local customs, rural life and folk traditions of Chinese / Taiwanese origin in order to register their resentment of the Japanization program (273). The literary language they used was Japanese, as this was the only language they were allowed to use, but the literary spirit their works expressed was essentially Chinese.

The political change that brought a real retrogression to the Taiwan literary scene was the Chinese Nationalist government's takeover of the island in 1949 after it lost the mainland to the Communists in the civil war. The drastic changes in language usage and social environment brought by this historical event caused most of the Taiwanese New Literature writers to halt their creative activities. At the same time, the strong sense of "rootlessness" also aroused frustration among the mainland writers. In an article published in 1961, T.A. Hsia lamented the desolate literary scene in Taiwan in the 1950s:

The most distressing literary phenomenon about Taiwan is its refusal to take cognizance of the immediate past. Nearly all the important creative works since the May Fourth Movement are inaccessible: either proscribed or out of print [. . .] Lu Xun, whose early stories and essays seem to me to have spoken best for the conscience of China during a period of agonizing transition, is regarded

²¹ *Literary Taiwan* was founded by the Japanese writer Nisikawa Mitsuru 西川滿 in 1940. The journal became propagandistic instrument for the Japanization policy. Three Taiwanese editors of the journal, namely Zhang Wenhuan 張文環, Huang Deshi 黃得時(1909-) and Yang Yunping 楊雲萍(1906-), were dissatisfied with the direction of the journal. They withdrew to form *Taiwanese Literature* 台灣文學 in 1941. But the two journals were forced to merge by the government under the new name *Taiwanese Literature and Art* 台灣文藝 in 1944 (Chang, "Taiwanese New Literature" 272).

as the most venomous of all literary vipers [. . .] (Hsia, T.A., "Appendix" 509) T. A. Hsia pointed out that the result of this suppression was the disastrous growth of "escapist literature" and writers of fiction who were "content with being mere daydreamers" (511).

After a decade of literary vacuity in the 1950s, the Taiwan literary scene witnessed a new turn in the 1960s and 1970s. As the elitist, Western-influenced modernist literary trend began to rise in Taiwan, an "alternative" or "oppositional" nativist literary movement also emerged, in which Chen Yingzhen was actively involved. The literary principle of the nativist literature (*xiangtu wenxue* 鄉土文學) was reminiscent of the May Fourth literary spirit. Like their May Fourth predecessors, the nativist writers aspired to raise social consciousness, to initiate cultural reform, and to save their country through their creative writings. Representative members of this nativist camp were Yang Qingchu 楊青矗(1940-), Wang Tuo 王拓(1944-), Chen Yingzhen, Huang Chunming 黃春明(1939-) and Wang Zhenhe 王禎和(1941-). In an essay written by Wang Tuo in 1977, entitled "It's literature of the present reality, not nativism" 是現實主義文學，不是鄉土文學, he explained the real nature of the ambiguous term "nativist literature." Wang said:

Instead of writing about rural regions and country people, nativist literature was concerned with the 'here and now' of Taiwan society, which embraced a wide range of social environments and people. Nativist literature thus should be defined as a literature rooted in the land of Taiwan that reflects the social reality and the material and psychological aspirations of its people. (Chang, "Literature in Post-1949 Taiwan" 415)

As we will see in the later chapters, the moral burden and social mission carried by the nativist writers, as inherited from their May Fourth precursors, were evident in the

creative works of Chén Yingzhen.

Chapter 2

About Chen Yingzhen

Born in the Yingge town of Taipei county 台北縣鶯歌鎮 in 1937, the ethnic Taiwanese writer Chen Yingzhen 陳映真 (real name Chen Yongshan 陳永善) started to publish fiction in 1959 when he was still a student at Tamkang College 淡江文理學院. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Taiwan in the 1950s, the period when Chen Yingzhen embarked on his artistic journey, witnessed an era of literary barrenness. The Nationalist government's stifling political control over the society cut the literary community off from the May Fourth literary works, and also from the works produced during the Taiwanese New Literature Movement. While many Taiwanese writers began to seek inspiration from the West, Chen Yingzhen persisted to carry on the May Fourth literary tradition in his writings. Early in 1973, Joseph Lau had already regarded Chen Yingzhen as "a very important and unique writer" in contemporary Chinese literature because he "almost alone of his contemporaries, [. . .] addresses himself to some of the most sensitive problems of his time" (Lau, "How Much Truth" 632). In an article written in 1990, Jeffrey Kinkley compared Chen Yingzhen's early fiction with Lu Xun's:

The outstanding constant social trait of Chen Yingzhen's early stories is their focus on the predicaments of oddly marginal persons from the lower reaches of society. It is in this way that Chen's early stories resemble Lu Xun's, along with syntax occasionally influenced by classical Chinese, themes of cannibalism, mental illness, and aberration, and above all a yearning for the "love and sincerity" ("truth and love" in Chen's formulation) that Lu Xun found lacking in Chinese society. (Kinkley 248)

Other critics also notice the resemblance between the writings of Chen Yingzhen and Lu Xun.

In his book *Lu Xun, Chen Yingzhen and Zhu Guangqian*, the Chinese scholar Huang Jichi 黃繼持 stresses this point:

When we look at [Chen Yingzhen's] early works, the trace of Lu Xun's writing style is evident [. . .] Lu Xun's melancholy prevails in those of Chen Yingzhen's writings that are somewhat influenced by Japanese. Lu Xun's concern for humanity and Chinese national consciousness are also present. Lu Xun's complex spiritual psychology [. . .] also probably inspires Chen Yingzhen to a certain degree. (123)

回頭細讀 [陳映真的] 早期創作，魯迅的影跡 [. . .] 確一早便已出現。魯迅的不無掩抑的委婉淒迷的一面，在陳映真的略帶日本風的文體中，依稀彷彿。魯迅式的人間情懷、國族意識，更宛然已在。至於魯迅錯綜複雜的精神心理 [. . .] 恐怕對陳映真也有一定的啓示。(123)

Indeed, Chen Yingzhen's resemblance to Lu Xun is not accidental. His particular interest in Lu Xun's works grew when he was still in his adolescence. Lu Xun's works not only connected Chen Yingzhen with the May Fourth literary tradition, but also influenced Chen's literary view throughout his life.

Lu Xun's Inspiration

From Chen Yingzhen's own writings, we know that his exposure to May Fourth literature began when he was in grade five. Chen's father, who was a primary school principal after Taiwan was recovered in 1949 and later became a missionary after the death of Chen's twin brother,¹ was the first person to stimulate Chen's interest in Chinese literature. In an article written in memory of his father, Chen describes his father's persistence in the promotion

¹ Chen Yingzhen's twin brother was named Chen Yongzhen 陳永真. In memory of this elder brother who died from illness at the age of nine, Chen adopted "Yingzhen" 映真 (which means to reflect the truth) as his pen-name (Chen, *Collected Works* 9:15).

of Chinese education in Taiwan:

Soon after Taiwan was recovered, the local schools were lacking in veteran teachers of Chinese language and history. My father insisted that the emigré teachers from the mainland, who are proficient in Chinese language and have substantial knowledge in history, were the most suitable people to take up these positions. Therefore, he began to run about and search for these people. Finally, he found a few mainlanders willing to come—those who can speak and teach standard Chinese, and are well-educated in the area of history. Being motivated by my father's enthusiasm, these teachers worked together with the principal to produce creative and lively lesson plans. In that boring era, they initiated a free and happy teaching trend in school. The Peach Town primary school was soon to become the most outstanding primary school in Chinese education in the province. (Chen, "My Father")

光復不久的台灣，語文、中國史地的師資奇缺。父親堅決以為，中國語文和史地，最好請熟達語文，對史地有具體學養的省外老師擔任為好。於是他四處求賢尋才，找到了幾位能說、能教標準漢語，受過史地教育的省外老師來。受到父親教育熱誠的感召，老師們和校長共同推出富有創意、生動活潑的教案，在那沈悶的時代，在校內激起了舒暢、快樂的教學熱潮。

桃鎮國小不久便成了全省國語文教育最優異的小學。(Chen, "My Father")

Chen specifically remembered a play he saw in his father's school. This play was performed by the students in their newly learned Mandarin. Chen remembered that a few students, interestingly named as "seven *jin*" 七斤, "six *jin*" 六斤, and "nine *jin*" 九斤, dressed in peasant clothes and began their conversation at the dinner table outside the house. One of the students, the old lady in the play, exclaimed, "I have lived long enough [. . .] the new generation is really worse than the last generation!" 我活夠了 . . . 真的一代不如一代! Chen Yingzhen says that it was not, until many years later, that he learnt that this play was actually adapted from Lu Xun's story "Disturbance" 風波. As a grade-five student, Chen was unable to grasp the full

meaning of Lu Xun's story, but he was impressed by the effort of the students and the teachers, and most importantly, his father's enthusiasm.

Chen Yingzhen's exposure to Lu Xun's works continued in that year. In another essay he wrote in 1976, entitled "The Whip and the Guiding Lamp" 鞭子和提燈, he remembered a critical event in his life:

It was probably the year when I was about to become a grade six student. I cannot remember clearly where I got an anthology of Chinese fiction. There was a story in the book about a risky adventure of a laughable bumpkin. Some people seized him by his pigtail, and beat him against the wall. Soon after the people had left, the bumpkin told himself that those who just bullied him were actually his own sons. Thereafter, he swung his head and sighed seriously for this "generation of unfilial sons." In doing this, he was able to comfort himself about his humiliation. (Chen, *Collected Works* 9: 19)

大約是快升上六年級的那一年罷，記不清從那裏弄來了一本小說集。其中有一個故事，說著一個可笑的鄉下老頭的可笑的冒險經歷。當他被人家揪著辮子，在冷硬的牆上搗打，待人走遠了之後，他就對自己說那凌暴的人是他的兒子，然後認真地為一個兒子忤逆的時代，搖頭嘆息，於是他的屈辱便得到了安慰。(Chen, *Collected Works* 9: 19)

The story Chen Yingzhen describes above is Lu Xun's "The True Story of Ah Q" 阿Q正傳.²

The anthology was probably Lu Xun's *The Outcry* 吶喊. Chen found this book at an old bookstall (Hao, "Forever Sisyphus"). At that time, during the early period of the Nationalist rule, publications of May Fourth literary works had not totally disappeared from the public yet. For example, a series of books on May Fourth literature was edited by the Taiwanese New

² "The True Story of Ah Q" was written by Lu Xun in 1921 and was first reprinted in *Taiwan minbao* in 1925.

Literature writer Yang Kui 楊逵 and was published in 1947.³

Lu Xun's fiction had a great impact on Chen Yingzhen, who admitted that Lu Xun's influence on him was "fateful" (Chen, *Collected Works* 6:35). From Lu Xun's stories, Chen derived a passion for his motherland and its people, which became the object of his life-long obsession. Chen wrote:

As I grew older, this worn-out old anthology of short stories (Lu Xun's *The Outcry*) finally became my dearest and most impressive teacher. I therefore knew China's poverty, its ignorance, and its backwardness, this China was mine. Therefore I also knew: I have to wholeheartedly love this China—my suffering mother. When every child of China can devote his own life to the cause of China's freedom and rejuvenation, the future of China will be hopeful and bright. (Chen, *Collected Works* 9:19)

隨著年歲的增長，這本破舊的小說集，終於成了我最親切、最深刻的教師。我於是才知道了中國的貧窮、的愚昧、的落後，而這中國就是我的；我於是也知道：應該全心去愛這樣的中國——苦難的母親，而當每一個中國的兒女都能起而為中國的自由和新生獻上自己，中國就充滿了無限的希望和光明的前途。(Chen, *Collected Works* 9:19)

As the conviction of a young boy, these statements might sound naive. But if we know the price that Chen Yingzhen paid in real life for the sake of his "obsession with China," the weight of the above conviction becomes heavy.

Seven Years in Jail

³ These books were reprinted in both Chinese and Japanese. The Chinese literary works were translated into Japanese by local intellectuals, aiming to provide the Taiwanese with a better knowledge of the literary scene in the mainland. Yang Kui also published the mainland writers' stories on the literary page, named *Bridge* 橋, of a local newspaper in which he acted as an editor. The *Bridge* was first published on August 1, 1947. It lasted for twenty months until its closing on March 29, 1949. Two hundred and twenty three issues had been published in total (Ye,

After Chen Yingzhen graduated from the Tamkang College in 1960 with a B.A. degree in English, he became an English teacher for a high school for two and a half years. During these years, Chen Yingzhen maintained his enthusiasm in both creative and critical writings. His stories and essays appeared in a number of magazines during the sixties, among them *Bihui* 筆匯, *Xiandai wenxue* 現代文學, *Wenxue jikan* 文學季刊, etc. Joseph Lau remarked that while the first stage of Chen Yingzhen's writings (1959-65) was dominated by "narcissism and nihilism," the works of his second stage (1965-67) "[bore] testimony to the author's loss of faith in the capitalist order" (Lau, *Unbroken Chain* 102). Chen Yingzhen honestly admitted that he was a "radical" in his twenties, that he had "made a bet on the card of the Communist government," although "the card turned out to be a bad one" 本以為中共這個注一定是好牌，那知道翻開來，竟是一張爛牌 (Chen, *Collected Works* 6: 9). At that youthful period, Chen Yingzhen even saw "mainland China as the answer to all questions." He was hopeful for the society Mao Zedong built on the mainland, although his closeness to the PRC had cooled as he saw the compromises it made with the world capitalist system in the 1980s (6: 8).⁴

In 1968, just before Chen Yingzhen was about to leave Taiwan for an international writing program organized by the University of Iowa,⁵ he was arrested by the Taiwan Garrison Command and was charged with alleged "subversive activities." He was given a ten year prison

Historical Outline 76-77).

⁴ The original text is: "十多年前，我是個激進派。當時，我從中國大陸的各種發展中去尋找各種問題的答案。現在，我知道這是荒唐的。舉例說吧，關於外國人的投資，我曾以為中共會處理得很得當。可是你瞧他們現在抱著洋人的腿的樣子" (Chen, *Collected Works* 6:8).

⁵ Chen Yingzhen was invited to participate in this program again in the fall of 1983. He made this trip and stayed for three months in the United States.

sentence, but the death of Chiang Kai-shek 蔣介石 in 1975 brought about an amnesty and he was released in September of that year.

The nature of Chen Yingzhen's "subversion" has never been made public. In a document issued by the Taiwan Garrison General Headquarters, it was stated that Chen Yingzhen, together with six others, was guilty of "intending to overthrow the government by violence in collusion with the Communist bandits" 意圖勾結匪共，以暴力顛覆政府 (Lau, "How Much Truth" 632). Chen Yingzhen himself suspected that it had to do with his participation in a Marxist study group (Kinkley 245). In this reading group, he read *Mao's Selected Works* 毛澤東選集 and other books about modern China and the Cultural Revolution.

Post-Imprisonment Period

The seven years in jail had not stopped Chen Yingzhen from creative writing. Instead, he continued to write in jail (Chen, *Collected Works* 15:58-59). After he was released in September 1975, he promptly resumed his role as creative writer and social critic, while supporting himself through work in the Taiwan pharmaceuticals plant of a U.S. transnational corporation (Kinkley 245). In November 1975, he was invited by a publishing house to publish his stories in two volumes.⁶ Starting from 1977, his new essays and short stories appeared in various Taiwan periodicals. "Night Freight" 夜行貨車, Chen's first story written after his imprisonment, marked the beginning of his third stage of creative writing. Besides fiction, Chen also wrote numerous essays on social and cultural criticism. The first piece that appeared after his imprisonment was an essay entitled "A Trial Criticism of Chen Yingzhen" 試論陳映真. At that time, no one knew that this piece of harsh criticism of Chen Yingzhen was written

by Chen himself since he had adopted another pen-name Xu Nancun 許南村 to write this essay. In this essay, Chen criticizes himself as “a petit intelligentsia writer from the city” 市鎮小知識份子的作家 (Chen, *Collected Works* 9:3), and he critically analyzes the deficiencies of his early writings.

In his post-imprisonment period, Chen Yingzhen continued to write in this critical manner. His social and literary views, after seven years of “re-education” in jail, appeared to be even more acute and controversial than before. In fact, most critics have noted a heightened “tendentiousness” in his post-imprisonment works, especially the series of stories clustering under the general title “The Washington Building” 華盛頓大樓 which explored the complex issue of the Taiwan-U.S. relationship under the capitalist order (Kinkley 245). Chen’s literary view that literature and writer, like Lu Xun and his works, should act as the “conscience” of society remained unchanged in his later years.

In the Nativist Literary debate in which Chen Yingzhen was actively involved in mid-1977, Chen was one of the nativist writers who received attacks from all sides. The Nativist Literary debate soon evolved into a highly politicized event. The modernist poet Yu Guangzhong 余光中 wrote an essay entitled “The Wolf is Here” 狼來了, accusing the nativists’ writings of being Maoist style—“literature of workers, peasants, and soldiers” 工農兵文學 (Chang, “Literature in Post-1949 Taiwan” 414). This fatal charge ignited highly emotional responses and retaliation from all sides. Chen Yingzhen relentlessly fought back with three critical essays.⁷ In these essays, he expresses his discontent with the Modernist’s

⁶ The two books *His First Case* 第一件差事 and *A Race of Generals* 將軍族 were published in November 1975.

⁷ The three essays are: “The Blind-spot of ‘Nativist Literature’” 鄉土文學的盲點, “Literature Comes from Society

imitation of the West and restates his commitment to the tradition of Chinese literature, which, as Chen believes, always carries a social mission of awakening the popular Chinese consciousness.

After the Nativist Literary debate, the Gaoxiong incident 高雄事件, which occurred on 10 December 1979, once again brought Chen Yingzhen into a political predicament.⁸ It was unclear how Chen Yingzhen was involved in the incident, but he was arrested and released after twenty-four hours (Chen, *Collected Works* 15:231). From 1983 to 1987, Chen Yingzhen published a series of stories—"Mountain Road" 山路, "Bell Flower" 玲瓏花, and "Zhao Nandong" 趙南棟—in exploration of the sensitive political issues of the 1950s. In subsequent years, Chen Yingzhen spent most of his time in activities other than creative writing. In November 1985, Chen founded the *Renjian* magazine 人間雜誌.⁹ He also began to concentrate his efforts on research and study of Taiwanese history (Hao, "Forever Sisyphus"). It was not until 1999, twelve years after his last publication of the novella "Zhao Nandong," that Chen Yingzhen resumed his artistic career and began to publish fiction again. His most recent works are "Returning Home" 歸鄉 (1999), "Night Mist" 夜霧 (2000), and "The Loyalty and Filial Piety Park" 忠孝公園 (2001). In an interview conducted in 2001, Chen Yingzhen, at the age of

and Reflects Society" 文學自社會反映社會, and "Establishing the Style of Nationalist Literature" 建立民族文學的風格.

⁸ On 10 December 1979, a demonstration organized in Gaoxiong by the anti-Guomindang group of the *Formosa Magazine* (*Mei Li Dao* 美麗島) ended in a riot. Fourteen of the leaders of the group were arrested. Eight were convicted of sedition and sentenced to prison terms ranging from twelve years to life. The government thus eliminated at one stroke the principal leaders of the radical wing of the Taiwanese opposition (Clough 870).

⁹ *Renjian* is a reportage magazine, in Chen Yingzhen's words, "*Renjian* is a magazine that uses photographs and words to record, witness, report and criticize." 人間是一本以圖片、文字去記錄、見證、報導和評論的雜誌. But

sixty-four, reflected upon his lifelong pursuit in both the artistic and political realms, and came up with a conviction that “creative writing remains the activity that brings [him] the most joy” (Hao, “Forever Sisyphus”).

because of the high running cost, the magazine closed two years later (Chen, *Collected Works* 6:58).

Chapter 3

Continuity: Chen Yingzhen's Obsession With China

As mentioned in chapter one, one of the most distinguishing characteristics of the May Fourth literary tradition, in C.T. Hsia's opinion, is its "obsession with China." All the major writers of this period were enkindled with the patriotic mission of saving China by awakening the souls of their country people. These writers believed that this goal could only be achieved through the production of realistic literature which aims at exposing the illness and darkness of society. In this chapter, by analyzing seven short stories and a novella of Chen Yingzhen, we will see that Chen's writings continue to carry on this May Fourth spirit. However, Chen's "obsession with China" is expressed through his obsession with Taiwan, for he strongly advocates the view that Taiwan is part of the great motherland. In almost every stage of Chen Yingzhen's writing career, he exerts himself to reflect and scrutinize, through his stories, the critical issues that emerge in the changing society of Taiwan. In the stories discussed below, Chen Yingzhen has vividly depicted four different aspects of his social concern, which betray his obsession with Taiwan's—and thus China's—future.

Urban and Rural Changes:

"The Dying" and "Apple Tree"

One of the major themes of the May Fourth literature is the depiction of rural changes in China. In Chen Yingzhen's fiction, the theme of changes in urban and rural life in Taiwan during the social transition period of the 1950s is also explored. In two of his early short stories, "The Dying" 死者 (1960) and "Apple Tree" 蘋果樹 (1961), Chen Yingzhen shows his ambivalence towards this issue. On the one hand, he is not optimistic about urban development; on the other hand, he, like Lu Xun in the 1920s, is reluctant to idealize the rural

masses.

“The Dying” and “Apple Tree” fall into the first phase of Chen Yingzhen’s writing career which lasted from 1959 to 1965. This period is characterized, in Chen’s own words, by a “Chekhovian” melancholy (Chen, “Orphan Mentality” 219). Both stories are about the life of the impoverished people, but their settings are antithetical. “The Dying” portrays a young city dweller returning to his village home from the city with the purpose of seeing off his dying grandfather. “Apple Tree” is, on the contrary, about a young man who rebelliously escapes from his rural family and moves to a poor urban district. In Chen Yingzhen’s depiction, neither the rural picture in “The Dying” nor the urban scene in “Apple Tree” is appealing. Chen seems to suggest that both the countryside and the city in post-1949 Taiwan are nightmarish worlds of poverty, suffering, sadness, and cruelty.

“The Dying” begins with the young city dweller Lin Zhongxiong 林鐘雄 arriving at his home village in Peach Town 桃園鎮 late at night after receiving the news that his 75-year-old grandfather, called Uncle Shengfa 生發伯, has died. But upon his arrival, his aunt tells him that his grandfather revived again after two hours of “death.” The first part of the story portrays Lin’s feelings and thoughts about this rural family, to which he has no compassion and love at all. This is partly due to the fact that he is only an adopted son of this family, and partly due to his unhappy childhood experience. His mother, Uncle Shengfa’s only daughter, was never a good woman and mother in Lin’s eyes. She is poor and unhappy, and has adulterous relationships with many men. Worst of all, she violently assaulted Lin in his adolescence. She later dies of a “home disease,” which is diagnosed by the doctor as liver cancer. This “home disease” also kills her two other brothers, Uncle Shengfa’s two beloved

sons. The second part of the story portrays the dying man Shengfa's mental activities in his semi-conscious state. He laments the misfortunes he has experienced throughout his life: lifelong poverty, the death of his three children, and the suicide of his wife, who was unable to tolerate their utter destitution and decided to end her life by jumping into a nearby stream.

The most startling contrast in this story is the youthful energy of Lin Zhongxiong and the lifeless deathbed of Uncle Shengfa. Lin, after his escape from the village home, begins his video rental business in the urban city Yilan 宜蘭. The narrator describes Lin's business as booming at that time because more and more villagers are getting rich and willing to spend money in entertainment. While Lin is hopefully planning for his future, Uncle Shengfa is waiting for the death. The dramatic contrast of these two characters symbolically represents the growth of urbanism and the decline of ruralism in the 1950s when Taiwan's economy was taking off with a gradual shift from agricultural production to industrial development.¹

This social transition not only brought a change in life style, but a transformation of values too. In the story, there are two kinds of values existing in the village—Confucian values as represented by Uncle Shengfa and moral decadence as represented by other villagers. When Lin looks at the old family photos hanging on the wall, he sees the image of Uncle Shengfa in the most classical Confucian style: Uncle Shengfa is dressed in Confucian

¹ Taiwan received U.S. economic aid from February 1951 to 30 June 1965, with a total amount of U.S. \$1,465,373,000 (100 million U.S. dollar per year in average), which facilitated economic growth in Taiwan (Xu 545). From April 1949 to January 1953, a series of land reform programs were begun. These reforms increased the income of individual farm families, which could provide a substantial market for the nondurable consumer goods produced by industry. At the same time, the land reforms also greatly diminished the power of the landlord class in the countryside. People who had been landlords in the past, because they were now no longer

clothing, sitting on an ebony chair which is placed beside a book shelf, and he is holding a half-opened copy of Sima Qian's *Records of the Grand Historian* 史記 in his hands, although the narrator says that Uncle Shengfa is actually illiterate. In fact, Uncle Shengfa's greatest concern in life, like his father's, is morality. When Uncle Shengfa's father was dying, he left these last words to Shengfa's mother, "old friend, I am going to die. Do not do any 'ugly' thing that will insult your children" 老伴，我死了，可不要做些難看的事，使兒女見羞 (Chen, *Collected Works* 1:53).² The "ugly" thing he refers to is adultery, since the village they live in is a morally decayed one where adulterous relationships are very common. Like his father, the last words that Uncle Shengfa wants to tell his daughter-in-law is, "daughter-in-law, you must not do anything that will insult our family" 媳婦呀，可千萬不要為我們家做些見羞的事 (1:53). However, his daughter-in-law, like his deceased daughter (Lin Zhongxiong's mother), secretly commits adultery too. As Uncle Shengfa dies, the Confucian values he represents seem to have been buried with him too. But the immoral customs of the village continue to thrive as if inevitable. Like Uncle Shengfa, the narrator feels quite helpless in the face of the spread of these customs. An invisible force seems to be in control of the villager's behavior. The narrator does not think that the villagers are evil—"they are probably as hardworking, miserable, and poverty-stricken as their ancestors" 那或他們也勞苦，也苦楚，也是赤貧如他們的先祖 (1:57). The moral decay is repeatedly interpreted by Uncle Shengfa as their unavoidable "fate" 命.

Urban values are represented by two other figures, Lin Zhongxiong and his niece

permitted to invest in farmland as they had traditionally done, began to invest in industry (Clough 838).

² The English translations of Chen's stories are my own, unless specified in the footnotes.

Xiuzi 秀子. Xiuzi is originally a poor village girl, but she begins to seek a better life in the coal mine area of Xinzhu 新竹 by working as a maid. Lin hears a rumor that Xiuzi has developed a relationship with a miner, and they sneak into a mine and stay there for a week until somebody drags them out. When Lin actually sees Xiuzi at the funeral, he can tell from her appearance that she has taken up the “miserable job” of prostitution. Xiuzi is a typical example of the “morally decayed” youth who flees the village and seeks opportunity in the city. Compared to Xiuzi, Lin Zhongxiong is apparently a good person since he is free of major flaws. But Lin’s hypocrisy and heartlessness make him a person no better than Xiuzi or the other villagers. Throughout the story, Lin does not show any true compassion towards his dying grandfather. He knows that he should be feeling sad, but somehow he does not feel sad at all. Nevertheless, he pretends to be sad so as to fulfill his “responsibility.” He even tries hard to think about the dramatic plots in movies in order to make himself cry. The narrator relates, “Therefore he calls out grandfather, repeatedly, and feels that he is bringing a slight sadness to his voice, this is actually a kind of self-pity as in a melodrama. It is not a real sadness at all” 於是他便又公公、公公的叫著，覺得自己的聲音裏，竟釀起一層薄薄的悲哀來了。但這又無非是劇情中的一種自我悲憫，無論如何，總不是實際的悲戚吧 (1:47-48). These episodes betray Chen Yingzhen’s discontent with urban values. He does not have a positive outlook for urban development, as none of the urban figures in the story is appealing. At the same time, he refuses to idealize the rural masses, as he also sees that the Confucian values in the village are gradually replaced by moral decay.

The second short story from Chen Yingzhen’s early stage which also explores the urban and rural theme is “Apple Tree.” The story is set in a slum of an urban city. It begins

with the arrival of a new tenant Lin Wuzhi 林武治, who becomes a law student in an ill-famed university after he flees from his peasant family and moves to the city. In the first part of the story, the narrator describes in detail the atmosphere of the slum and the daily activities of different individuals living in this area. The second part portrays Lin's life in the slum two months later. Lin becomes a popular figure in the slum because he gives hope to the poor by singing the "apple tree" song to them all the time. In the song, the central image "apple" represents felicity 幸福. Lin always sings, "Our apple trees should be bearing fruit now. At that time each of us will have an apple, an apple that belongs to us, the happiness that we want" 我們的蘋果樹該結實了，那時候我們都可以有一隻蘋果，一隻我們自己的蘋果，我們所要的幸福 (1: 111). As people in the slum begin to see Lin as a source of hope, Lin shatters their dream by committing an immoral crime. He develops a sexual relationship with the wife of his landlord Liu Shengcai 廖生財. Liu's wife is mentally disordered and she dies mysteriously on Lin Wuzhi's bed one day after they sleep together. The story ends with Lin's arrest by the police. After Lin's departure, the slum returns to its dismal condition and people live again like before.

In "The Dying," the decadence of urban life is subtly portrayed through the characterization of Lin Zhongxiong and Xiuzi. In "Apple Tree," however, this theme is expressed more explicitly by the narrator's detailed description of the slum scenes. From the narrator's eyes, the slum is a lifeless and hopeless place. People living there find no meaning in life and they pass each day without purpose. Living like "cats and dogs," the poor people can only react to their physical desires but are unable to initiate any self-reflection. The narrator describes "the same daily scenes of crying, beatings, voracious eating and dying—a

never-ending miserable melodrama like this becomes very boring and meaningless” 同樣的樸打、饕餐、慟哭乃至於生死，這樣的一齣演不完的可悲的生之鬧劇就變得十分沉悶而且無聊了 (1:108). This picture allows the reader to see the urban city from a wider perspective—what lies behind prosperity is poverty. It also destroys the urban dream of many rural youths. Chen Yingzhen reminds the reader that as the urban city begins to develop, there are still many dark corners existing within this apparently prosperous world.

The narrator's critical attitude towards Lin Wuzhi also shows Chen Yingzhen's disbelief that the intellectual can be the saviors of the poor. The narrator in the story is an omniscient person who is one of the inhabitants of the slum. When he introduces different scenes in the slum, he uses the pronoun “we” instead of “they,” such as “our street” (1:103), “our back-alley” (1:104), and “our living places” (1:108). Throughout the story, the narrator stands on the poor people's side and frequently unmasks Lin's pretense by making satirical comments on his “artistic” behavior. The narrator calls Lin a “big and stupid lad” 一個大而且粗笨的傢伙 (1:104) and “a lazy fellow” 一個懶惰的傢伙 (1:105), who “holds a position as student in the law school of a ‘third rate’ university” 在一個十分野雞的大學裏的法律系裏掛著學籍 (1:105). At the end, when Lin is arrested, the narrator shows no sympathy towards him. The narrator even concludes the story with the most satirical comment: “Master Wuzhi's apple farm has already been totally forgotten. Moreover, what Master Lin Wuzhi calls an apple tree is actually a small and unripe bush called autumn maple tree” 而若再說及武治君的蘋果園，那就早被人乾乾淨淨地遺忘了。而且，林武治君所指稱的蘋果樹，其實只不過是一株不高的青青的茄冬罷了 (1:117-18).

Although “Apple Tree” is dominated by an urban scene, pictures of rural life are

also evoked through Lin Wuzhi's conversation with his landlord's insane wife. However, the rural life experienced by Lin is nightmarish: his father defrauds other illiterate villagers by collaborating with the government land officials; one of his brothers has lung disease, another becomes a gambler; his nephew dies of a skin disease due to his gambler brother's lack of care; his mother is maltreated by his father and goes blind by excessive crying; and his younger sister elopes with an insolent mainlander. This gloomy picture presents another cruel reality which rejects any idealization of rural life. The urban city portrayed in this story is nightmarish, but Chen Yingzhen reminds his reader that the countryside is no better. In both "The Dying" and "Apple Tree," Chen's concern for urban and rural changes in Taiwan is prevalent. His gloomy portrayal of both the urban and rural life in these two stories illustrates his utterly pessimistic outlook on this social change. This ambivalent attitude towards the changing society of Taiwan is typical of Chen Yingzhen's fiction at the early stage, which differs greatly from his "satire and realism" in the second phase and from his more ideological works in his post-imprisonment years.³

Mainlander-Taiwanese Relationship:

"Old, Weak Tears," "A Race of Generals," "One Stray Green Bird"

During the early years of Nationalist rule in Taiwan, the uneasy relationship between the mainland exiles and the ethnic Taiwanese was one of the most sensitive social issues. After the "2/28 affair" that happened on February 28 in 1947, in which thousands of Taiwanese were killed in a campaign of political suppression by the Nationalist government,

³ The second phase of Chen Yingzhen's writing career lasted from 1966 to 1968, the year of his imprisonment. The representative work of this period is "The Comedy of Tangqian" 唐倩的喜劇. In Chen's own words, "Satire and realism [of this phase] take the place of the sentimentality and dispirited self-pity that had

a bitter and hostile ethnic gap between the mainlanders and the Taiwanese was created.

Although Chen Yingzhen himself is an ethnic Taiwanese, his compassion not only extends to his Taiwanese compatriots but also to the mainlanders. To him, the ethnic split is not only a "regionalist" problem but also a "national" plight. His concern for this issue becomes the recurrent theme in his literature. In three of his early short stories, "Old, Weak Tears" 那麼衰老的眼淚 (1961), "A Race of Generals" 將軍族 (1964), and "One Stray Green Bird" 一綠色之候鳥 (1964), the intricate relationships between the mainlanders and the Taiwanese are explored through the representation of gender relationships.

These three stories all involve the union of a mainland and an ethnic Taiwanese. In "Old, Weak Tears," the relationship between the mainland hero and the Taiwanese heroine is the most unequal and fragile one. The mainland hero, like those in many other Chen Yingzhen's stories, possesses a dominant power over the Taiwanese heroine because of their disparate social status.⁴ Their relationship, throughout the whole story, is built up on the ground of sexual attraction which does not extend beyond the physical level. This lack of true love and commitment finally leads to its end. Chen Yingzhen, however, expresses his sympathy rather than criticism towards both the mainland and the Taiwanese.

The mainland hero, Mr. Kang 康先生, is a declining but wealthy industrialist in his fifties. He lives with a twenty-three-year-old Taiwanese maid Ah Jin 阿金 and his son Qing'er 青兒, who has just entered into his adulthood. After Qing'er leaves home for his

characterized his (Chen Yingzhen's) work for so long" (Chen, "Orphan Mentality" 219).

⁴ This kind of relationship can also be found in Chen's other early stories such as "The Cats' Grandma" 貓牠們的祖母 (1961), "Document" 文書 (1963), "The Eternal Land" 永恒的大地 (1970), and "One Afternoon" 某

university studies, the aging and lonely Mr. Kang seduces Ah Jin. Ah Jin conceives a child by him and she wants to marry him while turning down other marriage options suggested by her elder brother. However, Qing'er's refusal to accept their relationship leads to Mr. Kang's rejection of Ah Jin's marriage request. He even asks Ah Jin to have an abortion.

Mr. Kang and Ah Jin's relationship lasts for about a year, but the genuineness of Mr. Kang's love towards Ah Jin is doubtful. Instead of truly loving Ah Jin, Mr. Kang establishes this liaison more out of his own selfish needs. The narrator states that "Mr. Kang seems to feel his lost youth and fading life force return from out of the female body of the twenty-three-year-old Ah Jin [. . .] sleeping with this youthful body makes Mr. Kang feel that her voluptuous youth is pouring into his aging body" 康先生從阿金的二十三歲的女體，彷彿感覺到他的失去的青春，失去了的生命 [. . .] 和這樣一個強健的青春共眠，康先生彷彿也感到豐滿的青春能夠滲滲地流入他的將老的軀殼裏去 (1:78). From this description, we know that Mr. Kang loves the youthful physical body of Ah Jin, but not Ah Jin herself.

However selfish Mr. Kang's love towards Ah Jin, the narrator does not criticize him the way that Lin Wuzhi is criticized in "Apple Tree." On the contrary, the narrator frequently expresses his sympathy and understanding towards both Mr. Kang and Ah Jin. In the portrayal of Mr. Kang's selfish behavior, the narrator always stresses Mr. Kang's inner conflicts. The narrator says that Mr. Kang feels "ashamed" when he knows that Qing'er is aware of his relationship with Ah Jin. In thinking about his life in the past year, Mr. Kang "struggles, although he cannot help indulging in this deep agony" 康先生掙扎著，然而他已

無由解釋地耽溺在這種劇烈的痛苦之中了 (1:74). Before he asks Ah Jin to have an abortion, he struggles too. At one point “he even considered the possibility of keeping this child” 然則他也不是不曾想過要留下那個孩子的 (1:75). The narrator’s portrayal of Mr. Kang’s struggle creates a feeling that Mr. Kang, although selfish and dominant, is not a total villain. He is also a victim of an evil power that he has no control of. From the narrator’s point of view, Ah Jin’s submission to Mr. Kang is also “fated,” since she is by nature “simple and innocent” 單純、質樸 (1:74). Like many other rural girls from southern Taiwan, Ah Jin is not pretty, but she is kind-hearted. She looks like “she is ‘fated’ to serve others and has a slightly chubby face” 阿金有一種似乎是命定要爲人僕婢的、略略發胖著的臉 (1:75).

Through the relationship between Mr. Kang and Ah Jin, Chen Yingzhen expresses his pity towards both the mainland exiles and the ethnic Taiwanese, but at the same time the story also reveals his pessimistic outlook for the intermingling of these two groups. From the very beginning, this relation is an unequal one, as exhibited in Mr. Kang’s dominance over Ah Jin. Ah Jin’s abortion also signifies the barrenness and fruitlessness of this relation. Their tragic separation at the end seems to be inevitable. But Ah Jin’s decision to leave Mr. Kang because she wants to have a child also reflects the potential strength of the Taiwanese.

Another short story “A Race of Generals” depicts a different type of mainlander-Taiwanese relationship. Unlike Mr. Kang and Ah Jin, the two protagonists in “A Race of Generals” are “drawn together from their equal positions of powerlessness—both are disenfranchised and both have little power to change their life” (Haddon 95). While Mr. Kang and Ah Jin’s relationship is built on physical grounds, the relationship of the two protagonists in “Family of Generals” is built purely on spiritual grounds. Compared to Mr. Kang and Ah

Jin, the two protagonists' love and commitment to each other is more sincere and profound.

The setting of "A Race of Generals" is a traditional Taiwanese institution—the drum and gong funerary band. The two protagonists are two members of this band, nicknamed Triangle Face 三角臉 and Little Skinny Girl 小瘦丫頭兒. Triangle Face, in his forties, is the trumpet player of the band who came to Taiwan from the mainland after 1949. Little Skinny Girl, a young teenager, is the band's baton twirler. The two figures meet in the band and are drawn to each other by their loneliness and unfortunate life experiences. While Triangle Face's trauma stems from his memories of World War II and the wife he left behind in China, Skinny Girl's agony is brought on by her family's cruelty—they sold her off into prostitution and she ran away from her owner. Triangle Face and Skinny Girl's relationship is gradually built up when they exchange whispered conversation at night through a partition wall of their sleeping quarters. Skinny Girl tells Triangle Face that her family must now sell their farmland in order to compensate her owner for his loss. Triangle Face, with kind intentions, offers Skinny Girl money so that she can pay him off without selling herself. But Skinny Girl cynically misinterprets Triangle Face's intentions and rejects his offer. One day, Triangle Face places his life savings under Skinny Girl's pillow and leaves the band. Five years later, the two meet again, and Triangle Face proposes marriage to Skinny Girl but she rejects him, because she thinks that her body is already tainted. She replies to Triangle Face that may be they can be united "in the next life, since [they will] both be as clean and pure as new-born babes" 下一輩子罷。那時我們都像嬰兒那麼乾淨 (Chen, *Collected Works* 1:151). The next morning, their dead bodies are found in a sugarcane field; they "lie there very straight and correct—just like two mighty generals" 兩個人躺得直挺挺地，規規矩

矩，就像兩位大將軍呢 (1:152).

The ending of the story can be read both positively and negatively. From the negative side, the two protagonists end up tragically in death. But from the positive side, they realize their dream of being united together. Although their union is made possible only in the spiritual realm, it is kept in total pureness and cleanliness from the beginning to the end since they never taint each other by their sexual desires. While the reader may think that the two figures are fictionalized as “saints,” the narrator reminds us that Triangle Face’s affection towards Skinny Girl “is not without sexual desire” 他不是對伊沒有過慾情的 (1:150). He, “like other single male members of the band, is a frequent visitor to brothels and gambling houses” 他和別的隊員一樣，一向是個狂嫖濫賭的獨身漢 (1:150). This description adds to our appreciation of Triangle Face’s profound love towards Skinny Girl. There seems to be a real spiritual quality in their relationship. Skinny Girl, like Triangle Face, is not a “saint” at all because her body is already tainted. Skinny Girl’s profound love towards Triangle Face is paradoxically shown in her refusal of his marriage proposal. She rejects him not because of her lack of love; on the contrary, she loves him so much that she does not want him to marry an “unclean” woman. Her decision can be regarded as a self-sacrificial one, a kind of “martyrdom” that adds to the spiritual quality of her love towards Triangle Face.

The mainlander-Taiwanese relationship expressed in this story is more idealized than the one in “Old, Weak Tears” in two aspects. First, the mainlander, as represented by Triangle Face, is in an equally low power position as the Taiwanese, represented by Skinny Girl. Second, their union is sex-free and is made possible in a clean, pure, and dignified way. While “Old, Weak Tears” is a gloomy reflection of the mainlander-Taiwanese relation, “A

Race of Generals” can be seen as Chen Yingzhen’s idealized vision of it.

“One Stray Green Bird” is a mixed version of “Old, Weak Tears” and “A Race of Generals.” The spiritual bondage lacking in Mr. Kang and Ah Jin’s relationship and the physical desire unfulfilled in Triangle Face and Little Skinny Girl’s relationship are both attained by the protagonists in “One Stray Green Bird.” The physical and spiritual love that exists between the mainlander and the Taiwanese in this story finally creates a new life which becomes the seed of hope to mend the gap between the two groups.

The hero Ji Shucheng 季叔城 is an exile from the mainland who becomes a Professor of Zoology in Taiwan. He falls in love with his ethnic Taiwanese maid who comes from a peasant family. Despite the disparity of their social status, they get married and even have a son. However, their marriage brings to them much social pressure, especially from Ji’s colleagues. Ji later decides to move away to another university, but the social pressure continues to follow them. Thereafter, Ji withdraws from many of his social activities and lives a secluded life with his wife. Their son is being sent to Mrs. Ji’s natal family so that he can be brought up in a less prejudiced environment. Mrs. Ji, after giving birth to this son, falls ill and dies after a prolonged illness of more than seven years.

Although Mrs. Ji dies, her relationship with Professor Ji is a hopeful and fruitful one. This hope is mainly represented by the birth of a new life—Mr. and Mrs. Ji’s son. At the end of the story, the narrator says that, “the child plays by himself in the court. The sun shines brightly on his face, hair, hands and legs” 孩子在院子裏一個人玩起來了。陽光在他的臉髮、手、足之間極燦爛地閃耀著 (2:18). This description hints at the promising future that awaits this child. Professor Ji also invests much hope in this child when he watches him and

says to the narrator, "Do not follow my path. And do not follow his mother's. Both of us will bear all the curses, even if the curses and death were both doubled. But he must be different. He should have a completely new and vivid life" 不要像我，也不要像他母親罷。一切的咒詛都由我們來受。加倍的咒詛，加倍的死都無不可。然而他卻要不同。他要有新新的，活躍的生命 (2:18).

Another positive aspect of Professor Ji and his wife's relationship is its influential power over the surrounding people. Unlike Mr. Kang and Ah Jin, or even Triangle Face and Little Skinny Girl, Mr. and Mrs. Ji's love is not only a personal love affair, but also a testimony to their neighbors. They show their neighbors that true love is possible between mainlanders and Taiwanese, and the power of this love is so great that it is able to change other people's lives. In the story, the narrator does not know how to love his wife truly until he meets Professor Ji. He sees and remembers how Professor Ji takes care of his sick wife and how Ji wails at his wife's funeral. The narrator says, "I will probably not be able to forget the sound of that man's crying as long as I live" 我大約永世也不能忘懷那種男人的慟哭的聲音罷 (2:15). Even Mr. Zhao 趙公, a friend of Professor Ji and the narrator, also says, "[he] can wail like that, [he's] wonderful . . . wonderful" 能那樣的號泣，真是了不起 . . . 真了不起 (2:16). Both the narrator and Mr. Zhao are moved by Professor Ji's courage to love, and are deeply inspired by it. The narrator begins to change his attitude towards his wife, and Mr. Zhao begins to feel very guilty about abandoning two wives in the past. Although Mrs. Ji dies at the end, the story remains hopeful about the mainlander-Taiwanese relationship. Chen Yingzhen, in this story, expresses his strong belief that the gap between mainlanders and Taiwanese can be mended one day. As the narrator says in the story, "In our sympathy and

our sighs, we grow closer to each other” 在同情和歎息裏，使我們接近了許多 (2:11). Chen Yingzhen also hopes for the same.

Political Oppression of the Nationalists:

“Bell Flower” and “Night Mist”

Soon after the Nationalists moved to Taiwan in 1947, stiff measures were implemented in order to consolidate the party's political control over Taiwan. To cope with the danger of subversion, the Nationalist government declared martial law in 1949, and it remained in effect for thirty eight years until 1987. The Taiwan Garrison Command and other agencies responsible for internal security maintained an extensive network of informants and watched carefully for any suspicious activities. Under martial law, people in Taiwan could not form any new political parties, publish new newspapers, or spread any opinion that was subversive in the views of the government. The government also deprived people of the right to strike or protest. Dissenters, especially those pro-Communist and pro-independence people, were caught, imprisoned, and even persecuted. But in the next fourteen years, Taiwan experienced a political transition from hard totalitarianism to soft totalitarianism, and then on to democracy. When most people began to turn their eyes upon the economic miracle and the political democratization in Taiwan, Chen Yingzhen urged people not to forget about their history, although it was painful and shameful. In two of his short stories, “Bell Flower” 鈴璫花 (1983) and “Night Mist” 夜霧 (2000), Chen probes into the miserable White Terror experience and examines some of the very sensitive political issues. Although “Bell Flower” and “Night Mist” are separated by seventeen years, these two stories portray the same theme. When the two stories are read side by side, the complex and multi-dimensional picture of the

early political scene in Taiwan becomes clear.

In these two stories, Chen Yingzhen provides us with different dimensions to rethink some seemingly simple questions, such as: who were the victims of the White Terror? How did these victims suffer? When we think about political purges, we usually see the dissenter—the persecutee—as the victim. The physical suffering and even the loss of life of the persecutee is the most common torture brought about by political oppression. Indeed, this is just the White Terror portrayed in “Bell Flower.” However, Chen Yingzhen also shows us a different dimension in the “Night Mist”—that the persecutors themselves are in fact also the ultimate victims. In contrast to the immediate physical suffering of the dissenter in “Bell Flower,” the suffering of the persecutor in “Night Mist” spans a longer period of time, and it is more internal and psychological.

First, let us look at the picture of White Terror in “Bell Flower.” The victim in this story is a dissenter named Gao Dongmao 高東茂. Gao is an ethnic Taiwanese who is enlisted by the Japanese to fight in the mainland during the war period. Soon after Gao arrives on the mainland, he turns to the Communist government and works for it. After Taiwan is recovered, Gao returns to his home village in Taiwan with a strong faith in Communism. He becomes a primary school teacher and teaches the poor children with great enthusiasm. He volunteers to be the class-master of the “little cowherd class” 看牛仔班—a class separated for economically and intellectually “deficient” students. Gao aims at helping these “little cowherds” to build up their confidence, morale, and Chinese consciousness. However, Gao’s Communist beliefs and activities are noticed by the government, and are seen as a potential threat to national security. As a result, Gao is chased, caught, and finally executed by the government.

One thing unique about this story is the way that it is told. Gao Dongmao, as the protagonist, does not appear until the later half of the story. Instead, Gao's story is told through the conversation of two village boys—ZengYishun 曾益順 and Zhuang Yuanzhu 莊源助—who are both Gao's students. The two children sneak out of school after Gao, their heroic teacher, suddenly disappears (Gao is actually on the run after a few government people try to catch him at his home on a rainy night). The two children do not know anything about persecution and they continue to play around in the village. They play with frogs and snakes in a secret dugout, sing the songs they were taught by teacher Gao, and tell each other about their own family and their feelings towards teacher Gao.

By telling the story from the children's point of view, "Bell Flower" succeeds in two ways. First, the innocent children and the pastoral picture create a dramatic contrast with the darkness of the political world. The more beautiful the pastoral picture, the more ugly the political world appears to be. Second, the story of Gao Dongmao is being told only in bits and pieces by the children. This allows the reader to have more room to imagine the life of a dissenter, and thus have more participation in the process of reading.

The pastoral picture is disrupted when the two children accidentally find teacher Gao in a cave, the place where Gao hides himself during his journey of escape. Gao's physical suffering is fully captured in a few sentences: "the dirty long hair, the bony cheek, the messy and dark beard, the red and fearful eyes—which are becoming bigger because of weight-loss and the dirt [. . .] Zeng Yishun begins to cry" 髒髒的長髮，深陷的面頰，凌亂而濃黑的鬍鬚，因著消瘦和污垢而更顯得巨大、散發著無比的驚恐的，滿是血絲的眼睛 [. . .] 曾益順開始流淚 (5:32). The next morning, the two children bring food to the cave

for Gao, but Gao has already disappeared. When they leave the place and walk down the mountain path, Zeng Yishun is so upset that he cannot speak a word. At the front entrance of a mainlander's house, where a lot of bell flowers are growing along the bamboo fence, Zeng Yishun runs away and leaves behind his friend Zhuang Yuanzhu. Zhuang describes this departing scene as follows, "I come slowly to a stop. Under the bamboo fence which is filled with pink blooming bell flowers, I see Ah Shun off. He is wiping his tears and walking far away" 我緩緩地立定了腳，在那欣然地開著粉紅色的鈴璫花的籬笆下，目送著阿順一邊拭淚，一邊走遠了(5:35). It is at this point—the bell flower bamboo fence—that their friendship comes to an end—they never meet again in the next thirty years.

Since the story is entitled "Bell Flower," the symbolism of the bell flower should not be overlooked. One of the significant meanings attached to it is the notion of separation. It so happens that the friendship between Zeng Yishun and Zhuang Yuanzhu comes to an end at the bell flower fence; the bell flower seems to symbolize the separation of intimate human relationships. This kind of separation, possibly brought about by political oppression, causes both physical and emotional pain. Friends are separated; family ties are severed; teachers and students, like Gao Dongmao and the two children, never see each other again. The bell flower also symbolizes the political separation between mainlanders and ethnic Taiwanese. The narrator emphasizes that the bell flowers are not just wild flowers but are grown by a mainlander family. This family is called by the local people as "Hakka potatoes" 客人仔蕃薯 (5:17). The bell flowers grow along a fence which surrounds the mainlander's house and separates this family from the outside environment. When people see these bell flowers, they immediately recognize the dominion owned by the mainlanders. The bell flowers are

beautiful, but they are also boundary that cannot be trespassed.

In “Bell Flower,” the physical suffering of dissenters as an immediate result of a political purge is Chen Yingzhen’s main concern. After seventeen years, Chen Yingzhen is still concerned with the issue of political oppression in his new story “Night Mist,” but the subject of his focus has been changed. In “Night Mist,” he examines the White Terror issue from the persecutor’s side and shows great sympathy towards the dissenter’s enemy—the security officers of the Nationalist government. From Chen Yingzhen’s point of view, this group of people is as pitiable as those who are persecuted. Although they do not suffer from the threat of persecution, they do suffer from a deep psychological wound. This kind of torture is a long term suffering which slowly corrupts one’s life. The tragic story of Li Qinghao 李清皓, the protagonist of “Night Mist,” is the best figure to illustrate this.

Li Qinghao is described by the narrator as an honest, simple and enthusiastic university graduate when he first joined the government’s security office in the 1970s. During the job interview, Li Qinghao is asked by Ding Shikui 丁士魁, who later becomes his mentor, why he wants to join the security office. Li answers, “To requite the country . . . to do something meaningful” 報效國家 . . . 做一點有意義的事 (Chen, *Loyalty and Filial Piety Park* 73). After Li joins the office, he is entrusted with the duty of stamping out Communist activities, arresting and interrogating suspects after the Gaoxiong Incident in 1979.⁵ From the bottom of his heart, Li does not enjoy the work. He later decides to quit the job and takes his wife Xiaodong 小董 to study overseas. Li returns to Taiwan after four years with a master’s degree in law. But he has already divorced Xiaodong. He tries to find a job in Taiwan but

⁵ See footnote number eight of chapter two for the Gaoxiong Incident.

fails. With the help of Ding Shikui, Li returns to the security office and works for the government again, though with much reluctance.

The main part of the story is a record of Li Qinghao's diary, which reveals in the first-person manner his feelings and experiences during his years of work. These diaries remind us of Lu Xun's "Diary of a Madman." Both protagonists, the madman in "Diary of a Madman" and Li Qinghao in "Night Mist," suffer from a kind of psychological illness. In his diaries, Li Qinghao constantly mentions that he suffers from a serious headache, and a deep sense of fear. Li Qinghao's fear penetrates deeper as he watches the swift changes occurring in the Taiwan political scene in the 1980s: the Democratic Progressive Party 民進黨 was established in 1986, the decree of martial law was lifted in 1987, the Nationalist leader Jiang Jingguo 蔣經國 passed away in 1988, etc. What strikes Li Qinghao most is the fact that many political criminals that he and his colleagues had imprisoned in the seventies are released one by one.

Although Li Qinghao finally relinquishes his job and becomes a college instructor, a deep sense of guilt and fear continues to invade his heart in later years. He fears that those dissenters once persecuted by him will take revenge on him after they are released. When he watches some of these people now become prominent figures in the Taiwan political scene, freely expressing their "independent Taiwan" political views on television, his fear drives him to death. As he watches the documentary program *Ten Years of Smoke and Cloud* 十年煙雲 on television, he is also reminded of the "sins" of his past. When an episode of the government's suppression of *dangwai* 黨外 activities is documented, Li's fear reaches its pinnacle. He fears that his face will be filmed and people will recognize him and take revenge

on him after watching this program.

Besides guilt and fear, Li Qinghao is also invaded by a sense of betrayal. He feels that he is being betrayed by other security officers, his colleagues in the old days. In the past, these colleagues acted ruthlessly towards the suspects. They abused their power in the process of interrogation, and put many of the dissenters in jail by means of violence. But now, after the political climate has changed, these old colleagues seem to forget completely what they had done in the past. They turn their face, hide and deny their past deeds, and try to join the cohort of the new power-holders—those they had persecuted so fervently in the past. Worst of all, they have found shelter for themselves in the new political world, but have left Li Qinghao behind. This group of people, numbering one to two hundred thousand, is described by Li Qinghao as the “night mist” of the city:

A population of one hundred to two hundred thousand of people! You are the night mist which flows around in this fog-shrouded city. What have I done for you to abandon me in the cave of the wolf, turn your hearts to steel and never get in touch with me again? Oh, you are the night mist that veils this city—omnipresent, vicious, cold, and white [. . .] (119)

十幾、二十萬人哪！你們是這城市裏到處漂流籠罩著的夜霧。我做了甚麼，竟讓你們把我一個人扔進了豺狼的洞窟，卻又鐵了心腸不肯來連繫。哦你們這籠罩著這大城市的夜霧，無所不在、陰狠、寒冷的白色的夜霧 [. . .] (119)

Li Qinghao, on the one hand, pities his own forlornness; on the other hand, he strongly condemns the hypocrisy of government officials and politicians. Unable to bear the psychological burden he has carried for so many years, Li Qinghao chooses to end his life at last by hanging himself in the hospital. From Chen Yingzhen's point of view, Li Qinghao is also a poor victim of the whole process of political oppression, although his way of suffering

is different from the physical torture experienced by Gao Dongmao in "Bell Flower."

Transnational Business Culture in Taiwan:

"The All-incorporating Business God"

In Chen Yingzhen's post-imprisonment years, he wrote a series of short stories and novellas depicting the problematic role of American-owned transnational corporations in Taiwan. "The All-incorporating Business God" 萬商帝君 (1982) is one of the novellas of this "Washington Skyscraper" series. In this story, Chen portrays the transnational corporation as the new god of modernity. As Jeffrey Kinkley has noted, "the evil of the new godhead is moral rather than economic or political. It lies in modernization's utter relativism, instrumentalism, hypocrisy, and lack of ties to other genuine human values" ("From Oppression to Dependency" 261). Chen Yingzhen does not deny the economic benefits brought to Taiwan by this new world system. He is just concerned with the homogenizing effect of the new corporate culture, which seems to replace or even destroy some of the precious human values that exist in Chinese culture.

In "The All-incorporating Business God," the impact of the business culture on Taiwan is multifaceted. It is demonstrated through the protagonists' different reactions to this social change. Lau Hokk Kim⁶ 劉福金 is a character who has successfully climbed up the ladder of success in Moffitt & Moore International, the transnational corporation in this novella which claims to be the shaper of a new global culture, fulfiller of needs, and protector of small nations like Taiwan. Lau acquires the skills and qualifications that meet the company's needs, such as English-language abilities and an MBA degree, which help him to

⁶ Lau Hokk Kim is a native Taiwanese. When he introduces himself in the story, he emphasizes that the English

secure his managerial position in this white-male-run transnational corporation. But he has also totally submitted himself to corporate values, and has become a subordinated and culturally neutered slave of his American boss.

The story begins with the introduction of Lau as the new Marketing Manager of Moffitt & Moore International. After Lau obtains his MBA degree, he works in an American pharmaceutical company as an assistant manager for three years. This background, plus Lau's youthful energy and enthusiasm in global marketing and management, makes him the new star of the company. In his marketing plan presentations and the M.B.O. (Management by Objective) classes given by him to his colleagues, Lau always speaks in management science jargon which he has learned mostly from marketing textbooks. Lau totally identifies himself with the philosophies of the new global world. In his diary, he wrote down his new faith:

Under the transnational corporate plans, they only speak in one common language: English. They live under the same standard: the luxurious restaurant, the fine food, the same kind of coffee [. . .] more importantly, all of their analysis, research, study and work aim at the same goal—the international interests of Moffitt & Moore International. I should be changed from being a Taiwanese to being a global man [. . .] I belong to a new, smart and elitist ethnic group of “Global Manager” and “Global Marketing Man” who can make the world better and life richer. This is really a religious moment. (Chen, *Collected Works* 4:184)

在多國籍公司的計劃下，他們只講一種共通的語言——英語；在同一水準下生活：奢華的觀光飯店、豐美的食物、同樣的咖啡 [. . .] 更重要的是，他們全為了一個目標——莫飛穆國際公司全球性的利益——而分析、研究、學習、工作。我應該從台灣人而成為國際人 [. . .] 我屬於一個新的、

聰明的、精英的、創造世界更好、更豐盛之生活的民族和人種：Global Manager! Global Marketing Man! 這真是宗教性的時刻。(Chen, *Collected Works* 4:184)

Chen Yingzhen depicts Lau Hokk Kim as a man who has totally succumbed to the transnational business culture. As seen from the above words, Lau's biggest life goal now is to become a "global marketing man." In his view, it is a new type of "ethnic group" which, he thinks, is superior to his Taiwanese ethnic identity. Lau now sees that his new "motherland" is the "global market," in which Taiwan is only a small part of this "world shopping centre." Moffitt & Moore International is his new master. His object of loyalty, under this new world order, is this American company, not his own nation. Lau even looks at his real motherland Taiwan from a commercial point of view. In his eyes, Taiwan is a good place because it is a "market" with a large business potential. And his fellow country people are his potential "customers" whose desires can be created and manipulated by his marketing plans.

In the story, Chen Yingzhen also creates another character Lin Suxiang 林素香 whose attitude towards business culture is the opposite of Lau Hokk Kim's. Suxiang is the elder sister of Lin Dewang 林德旺, a low ranking staff member in Moffitt & Moore International, whom I will analyze latter. Suxiang, as a poor village girl, lived in the rural area of Taiwan all of her life. In order to support her family, she works hard as salesgirl, waitress, and construction site worker. The job that lasts the longest is the one that relates to the Taiwan folk religion—she serves as a "planchette girl" 乩童⁷ in a local temple called

⁷ a "planchette girl" helps to facilitate a religious activity called *Fuji* 扶乩, in which the planchette girls hold a frame, and allow a stick hanging from the frame to write on the planchette. The writing is seen as god's instructions.

“Palace of Three Worlds” 三界宮. Suxiang works to pay for the education and medical fees of her brother Dewang. Although her life is poor, she maintains a high self-respect and lives a dignified life. She is the only character in the story who never feels shameful about her cultural roots, and the only person that refuses to yield to the new world system.

In a letter written by Suxiang to her brother Dewang, she abruptly asks him to quit his job, leave the city and return to the rural home because she has observed some negative changes in Dewang's character. She knows that Dewang has used all the money that she gives him to buy new clothes, leather belts, leather shoes, and audio sets—things that make Dewang feel better about himself in the city. In the letter, Suxiang tells Dewang, “We were born as peasants. When we farm, our life is fulfilled [. . .] Peasants have their own path” 我們究竟是做田的人，要做田才會心安 [. . .] 做田人有做田人的去路 (4:139). Dewang explains to her that “since he is working in a foreign company, and it is a superior place for superior people, he cannot avoid spending some money on clothing at the beginning” 他告訴姊姊素香，他在一家外國公司工作。由於那是一些高等人在一起的高等的地方，起初，是難免要花一點錢，穿得好些 (4:139). But Suxiang immediately refutes Dewang with a rhetorical question, “Are foreigners more superior?” 外國人，就高等嗎 (4:139)? Suxiang's statement is not emotional and is supported by her first-hand experience. When she works as a waitress in a high-class restaurant, she observes that “After drinking a few cups of wine, Japanese and Americans appear to be equally ugly” 幾杯酒下肚，日本人，美國人，誰都一般醜 (4:139).

Suxiang also realizes the truth that “Foreigners, no matter how decent they look, are ultimately outsiders [. . .] And as outsiders, they will never give you any advantage” 外國

人，怎麼體面，都是外莊人 [...] 是外莊人，就休想給你留下什麼好處 (4:141).

Suxiang's view towards foreigners sounds quite cynical, but it might also be a truth that most local people do not want to admit. Suxiang later uses a metaphor to remind Dewang about the importance of recognizing one's ethnic roots. She says to Dewang, "if flowers and grass leave the soil [...] for sure they will wither" 花草若離了土，就要枯黃 (4:142). This statement has a prophetic power attached to it. Lin Dewang's dramatic life changes after he decides to return to the city proves that Suxiang's statement is right.

While Lau Hokk Kim and Suxiang represent the values of two opposite worlds, Lin Dewang 林德旺 is a poor man who falls in-between and fails to fit himself to either world. Growing up as a village boy, Lin is a kind-hearted person whose character demonstrates some of the good traditional values, especially his honesty and loyalty to people. However, Lin wrongly applies the values of the village world to play the game of the business world. His problem is not that he is loyal and sincere to people, but that he is too naïve. In a company that is full of office rivalries, cliques, and conspiracies, Lin Dewang still believes that his hard-working and loyal character will finally win him the trust of his boss and help him to rise to the position of manager that he has dreamed of for so long.

Indeed, Lin Dewang tries very hard to gain his boss' attention in the company. He does everything faithfully that his boss asks him to do. He even gains a reputation for being honest and sincere. However, his boss seems not to pay any attention to him at all and even leaves out his name in a marketing training course. Feeling frustrated, Lin Dewang often cries secretly in the company's library for many time. He always tells himself that "I am loyal, trustful, [...] and Mr. Chen the manager can also see my industrious and uncomplaining

attitude, right?” 我忠心、可靠 [...] 陳經理看得見我任勞任怨，對不對？(4:101).

Lin fails to understand why a faithful, trustworthy and hardworking person like him is unable to gain his boss' favour. This dilemma gives him so much pressure that his old psychiatric illness—paranoia—comes back again. Eager to find an explanation, Lin Dewang comforts himself with the “Ah Q” mode of thinking.⁸ He begins to see that all the frustrations he encounters are heaven's trials that prepare him for a great future task. He even quotes Mencius' 孟子 words as his motto: “If the Heaven is going to entrust a person with a great task, it will first make him tired with heavy labours, and then make his heart and mind suffer” 天將降大任於斯人也，必先勞其筋骨，苦其心志 (4:104).

Lin's thinking pattern is traditionally Chinese, but the business world he dwells in is basically American. When he tries to apply the Chinese rules to the American business world, he is totally disillusioned, which leads to his madness at the end. Compared to the other two characters, Lau Hokk Kim and Suxiang, Lin Dewang is the most miserable victim of the global business culture. He is always an in-between person, being squeezed by the tension of the two worlds, and never finds a resting place in either world. Lin Dewang's experience somehow represents the embarrassing circumstance of many Taiwanese who struggled to survive through the drastic economic changes in Taiwan in the seventies and eighties.

From the four aspects that we have analyzed above—urban and rural changes, Mainlander-Taiwanese relationship, political oppression of the Nationalist, and transnational

⁸ In Lu Xun's major story “The True Story of Ah Q” 阿 Q 正傳 (1921), the protagonist Ah Q is characterized by a mode of thinking called “method of securing spiritual victory” 精神勝利法, by which he can rationalize the results of his humiliations so that they appear advantageous to him. From then on, people use “Ah Q-ism,” “Ah Q logic” and “Ah Q-like” in living speech to describe people with such personality.

business culture in Taiwan—we can see that Chen Yingzhen is a writer with strong social concern. Like the May Fourth intellectual, Chen writes with a definite mission—he wants to expose the social problems of his country and to awaken his people’s “sleeping mind,” so that the future of his country and people can be improved. This “obsession with China” is indeed a spirit inherited from the May Fourth literary tradition, and it prevails in Chen Yingzhen’s stories as an eminent characteristic. However, if we stop here and say that Chen Yingzhen inherits the May Fourth literary tradition *totally*, we are only half right. In the following chapter, we will see the other side of the coin—Chen’s works also demonstrate changes from the May Fourth literary tradition.

Chapter 4

Change: Chen Yingzhen's Attitude Towards Western and Chinese Culture

In Lin Yüsheng's critical study of the "totalistic iconoclasm" phenomenon occurring during the May Fourth period, he states that "Modernity now rested on totalistic rejection of the past [. . .] Such a situation of permanent war against Chinese tradition made its creative transformation into modernity all but impossible, yet it seems that only through such a transformation can the crisis of culture in China be, relatively speaking, settled" (Lin 155). Looking back at the May Fourth era, we realize that the May Fourth intellectuals' organismic conception of culture led to their *total* rejection of Chinese tradition and *total* adoption of Western culture, which is seen by Lin Yüsheng as an impediment to the creative transformation of Chinese culture.

From the May Fourth intellectuals' point of view, there is no need to examine the Chinese and Western tradition in any substantive way. To them, China's weakness as a nation in comparison with foreign countries' wealth and power in the beginning of the twentieth century became a substantial proof that there is nothing valuable in Chinese tradition. At the same time, there is not a single element in Western culture that is not worth adopting. However, Chen Yingzhen objects to this totalistic mode of thinking. From Chen's point of view, creative transformation of culture is a result of the critical examination of one's own cultural tradition, and also a careful scrutiny of foreign culture.

In this chapter, through the analysis of eight stories written by Chen Yingzhen, we will see how Chen's attitude towards both Western and Chinese culture differs from that of the May Fourth intellectuals. On the one hand, he does not advocate the totalistic acceptance of foreign ideology. On the other hand, he does not reject Chinese culture in a totalistic

manner. There are at least three moral values in Chinese culture that he embraces.

Problem of Western Culture:

“Oh! Susanna,” “Big Brother He,” “Night Freight”

In essays and interviews concerned with East-West issues, Chen Yingzhen is persistently critical of the Westernization of Chinese culture. Chen attacks a collective consciousness in Taiwan which blindly imitates everything from the West, which is especially obvious in the development of modernist literature in the 1960s and 1970s. As mentioned in an essay by Lucien Miller, “Chen’s prose as a social critic is marked by a burning intensity, a univocal voice ardently concerned about stopping Western contamination of native Third World cultures” (“Occidentalism and Alterity” 204). Chen’s anti-Westernization view, which is the opposite of the May Fourth intellectuals’ “total-Westernization” spirit, is an important theme in his short stories. If Chen expresses this view by a “burning intensity” and “univocal voice” in his critical essays, how does he express this critical view in his short stories?

In three short stories—“Oh! Susanna,” 哦！蘇珊娜 (1966), “Big Brother He,” 賀大哥 (1978) and “Night Freight” 夜行貨車 (1978)—Chen Yingzhen portrays the image of Westerners, namely Americans, in three different ways. These images of Westerners illustrate Chen’s *growing* distrust of Western culture. In “Oh! Susanna,” the Westerners appear as charming, saint-like religious characters. The attractive, at the same time mysterious, image of Westerners continues to occur in the first half of “Big Brother He.” But the second half of the story begins to portray the “sickness” of big brother He, the Western protagonist in the story. After his “mask” is thrown off, we begin to see all the problems lying underneath his beautiful surface. Chen’s idea of impoverishment of Western culture is even more directly revealed in “Night Freight,” in which the Western protagonists are portrayed as downright

lecherous and ruthless characters.

Let us look at “Oh! Susanna” first. This story is about a young college couple spending their holiday at a seaside resort. The narrator describes her boyfriend, Li 李, as a handsome, profligate, and rough lover. He, just like her, had many lovers before. On their first night together, they take a walk to the beach. On their way, they come across a newly-built cement building—the local Mormon church. The narrator is puzzled by the meaning of “saint” in the full name of the church, the “Church of the Latter Day Saints.” She even asks Li what a saint is. On the beach, they hear the melody of the old American folksong “Oh! Susanna” coming from the direction of the church, which also captivates the mind of the narrator. Two days later, when they are shopping at the market, they encounter a pair of young male Westerners—Mormon missionaries named Pierre and Samuel. In the days that follow, they begin to see this Mormon pair everywhere—at the market, the bus stop, even outside their window.

In the eyes of the narrator, the two Mormon missionaries are mysterious and charming. They are young, good-looking, sophisticated and well-mannered. Among the two, Pierre, a French American, is particularly attractive to the narrator. He is tall, free-spirited, and happy. His brown eyes, thin lips, shyness and gentle voice infatuate her. Getting tired of the yuppie character of Li and her ex-boyfriends, she longs to start a new life—disciplined, decent, and religious—with a partner like Pierre. During Pierre’s visit to their home, the narrator makes coffee for him. She secretly gazes at his hands when he drinks coffee. And she finds happiness in serving him because he brings out her maternal side. She even imagines herself having breakfast and watching opera with Pierre, and even kissing him.

Although Li’s attitude towards Pierre is not as passionate as the narrator, he also

expresses admiration for the two foreigners. Li praises their lofty ideals and devout faith, and thinks that “they are people who also pursue justice [. . .] believe in peace and love.” 他們也在追求著正義 [. . .] 他們也信仰著和平、互愛 (2:58). While Li and the narrator begin to build up a friendship with the two foreigners, some bad news comes—Pierre dies after he is knocked down by a car while he and Samuel are riding their bicycles on a narrow street. Pierre’s death deeply shocks the narrator. She is in such great pain that “[she] feels all [her] sentiments die out, as if [she] cannot love anyone again in this life” 我覺得自己的七情皆死。彷彿這一生一世再也不會去愛一個人了罷 (2:61). At the end of the story, she leaves Li quietly in the next morning and returns home.

Throughout the story, the image of the Westerner, as represented mainly by Pierre, is positive in the eyes of both the narrator and Li. The narrator even idealizes Pierre. She sees Pierre as an almost perfect character, or a saint, that comes from a dream world rather than this world. She says that Pierre “uses a dream to support [his] life. He is pursuing a kind of ambition that has been lost in this world, which is murdered, abused, imprisoned and hanged by people a long time ago” 他 [. . .] 用夢支持著生活，追求著早已從這世界上失落或早已被人類謀殺、酷刑、囚禁和問吊的理想 (2:61). Pierre’s proper and gentle personality also makes him a more appealing character than Li—the only Chinese man in the story. Chen Yingzhen cleverly turns around the stereotyped image of “American yuppie” and “Chinese gentleman.”

The idealization of Westerners continues to appear in the first half of “Big Brother He.” However, in the second half of this story, Chen makes a sharp turn and totally demolishes the ideal image of Westerners. Chen critically reveals the vulnerability of

American culture, breaking the dreams of those who see America as an almighty saviour.

Like “Oh Susanna,” this story is narrated by a young female college student, named Xiao Cao 小曹. She tells about her encounter with a foreign man at a Catholic polio rehabilitation center in the Taiwan countryside when she goes with a student service club to help out at this center in the summer. This foreigner is called “Big Brother He” 賀大哥 by the people at the center because his last name is “Hopper.” Big Brother He is a tall American in his mid-twenties. His gaunt face, piercing brown eyes, dark hair and full beard remind Xiao Cao of the face of Jesus on Christmas cards. What strikes Xiao Cao most is that Big Brother He does not only look like Jesus, he also acts in a Christ-like manner. He serves the children at the center wholeheartedly and all the children adore him. As a nun of the center remarks, he has Jesus’ heart (3:76). Xiao Cao is soon attracted by Big Brother He’s charisma—he speaks little, but he has a great self-sacrificial love, and he serves the weak with sincerity. Indeed, Big Brother He has many distinctive views about human love. When Xiao Cao mistakenly assumes that he is a Catholic, he tells her that “if loving and caring for people only becomes the duty of the followers of this or that religion, it tells us that this world is no longer a humane world” 如果愛別人，關心別人的事，竟只成為一些稱為這個或者那個宗教的教徒的事，這就告訴我們，這個世界已經不是人的世界 (3:69). When Xiao Cao asks him how he can change this ugly world, he answers, “Let us love. Let us believe. It is the kind of love that embraces and trusts human beings unconditionally” 讓我們去愛，讓我們去相信 [...] 愛，無條件地愛人類，無條件地相信人類 (3:74).

Xiao Cao totally trusts Big Brother He and sees him as her spiritual mentor. The dramatic turn of the story occurs when Big Brother He suddenly disappears, and Xiao Cao

receives a call from a friend, saying that he has been caught by the police and is sent to the hospital. By reading Big Brother He's previous medical records, which are sent from America, Xiao Cao discovers the real story about him. He is actually a psychiatric patient, diagnosed as having amnesia and schizophrenia. His real name is "Mike Chalk" instead of "Hopper." He sneaks away from America to Taiwan and starts a new life because he wants to forget about his past—his participation in some brutal massacres that occurred during the Vietnam war. The second half of the story is mainly a record of conversations between Big Brother He and his doctor, unfolding Big Brother He's anguish and guilt as a participant in the cruel events—how he and other soldiers brutally killed and raped the innocent Vietnamese.

The real Big Brother He shocks the reader with the conflict of the two selves that exist within him. He is a selfless savior of sick children who makes wonderful crafts for them with his loving hands, but at the same time he is also a bloody murderer who shoots innocent villagers with his guns. He is a dreamer who strives to create a beautiful world with love and faith, but he is also a cruel man who spreads the seed of hatred. He is Xiao Cao's spiritual mentor who teaches her how to contribute herself to this world with love, but he is also a vulnerable patient who awaits healing from his own doctor.

The conflicting identity of Big Brother He is indeed an expression of the American dilemma, which is carefully observed by Chen Yingzhen. While many Taiwanese in the 1970s see America as their object of dependency in both political and economic realms, Chen Yingzhen tries to unfold the vulnerability of this great giant. In his view, America, like Big Brother He, is also "sick," especially during the Vietnam War period. But its sickness is carefully covered by a beautiful surface—the high-sounding values like equality, human freedom, democracy, etc. Chen Yingzhen's critical view is directly expressed in the following

conversation between Big Brother He and his doctor:

Doctor: You think that the Vietnam War has hurt White people? [. . .]

Patient: White people are sick. America is also sick. You know, the Vietnam War especially makes me sick. I want to vomit. (3:85)

醫生： 你覺得，越南的戰爭傷害了白種人嗎？[. . .]

病人： 白種人有毛病 (sick)，美國也有毛病，你知道；越戰，特別是，令我厭惡(sick)，反胃。(3:85)

Through the characterization of Big Brother He, Chen Yingzhen expresses his distrust of Western culture.

We have seen how the image of the Westerner changes from the saint-like Pierre in “Oh! Susanna” to the half-angelic and half-devilish character of Big Brother He. In Chen Yingzhen’s “Night Freight,” the image of the Westerner is downright displeasing. It no longer contains any positive elements that can be found in either Pierre or Big Brother He. Mr. Morgenthau 摩根索, the American boss of Lin Rongping 林榮平 and Zhan Yihong 詹奕宏 in the Taiwan Malamud Electronics Company 台灣馬拉穆電子公司, is portrayed as the story’s villain from the beginning to the end. More importantly, Mr. Morgenthau, and the Western culture represented by him, fail to control the Chinese characters Zhan Yihong and Liu Xiaoling 劉小玲 at the end of the story, when both Zhan and Liu openly denounce Mr. Morgenthau’s insulting behavior and request an apology from him before they run away from the farewell party. This ending is an explicit expression of Chen Yingzhen’s anti-westernization stand.

Right at the beginning of the story, the narrator shows a strong antipathy towards Mr. Morgenthau by vividly describing his loathsome behaviour:

However, even in the midst of stress Mr. Morgenthau had not lost his knack

for pranks, pranks which suggested an animallike vitality: impromptu teasing of the female workers; dirty jokes; loud-mouthed cursing, followed by a pat with his large hand on the shoulder of the Chinese manager who happened to be the object of the curse, and an “OK, Frank, don’t let our discussion affect your appetite for lunch,” and then a guffaw.¹ (3:97)

然而，摩根索先生在緊張中仍不失他那代表動物一般的精力的惡戲：和女職員作即興式的調笑；說骯髒的笑話；破口開罵，然後用他的大手拍拍挨罵的中國經理的肩膀：「OK Frank，不要讓我們的討論影響了你中午的食慾。」然後嘩嘩大笑。(3:97)

Mr. Morgenthau’s “animallike” behavior is fully demonstrated in his attitude towards the opposite sex. He harasses Liu Xiaoling both verbally and physically by asking her if she likes his beard, and then he embraces her. When dealing with fiscal matters, such as how to account for a fairly sizable “public relations expense,” he suggests that Lin Rongping handles it by skillfully “playing Tokyo politics” (3:98). All these episodes suggest that Mr. Morgenthau is lecherous and dishonest. Although he holds absolute power in the company, he also corrupts absolutely.

The climax of the story appears at the end, when the drunken Mr. Morgenthau starts talking about Taiwan and America at the dinner table of Liu Xiaoling’s farewell party. He unintelligently offends all the Chinese around him by arrogantly saying that:

S.O.B. said that we multinational companies here will never let Taiwan be wiped off the map [. . .]

We American businessmen think Taipei is hundreds of thousands times better than New York, and you fucking Chinese think the United States is a fucking paradise. (3:135)

¹ The English version of “Night Freight” is translated by James C.T.Shu, collected in *The Unbroken Chain—An Anthology of Taiwan Fiction since 1926*, p.102-32.

S.O.B.說，我們多國公司就是不會讓台灣從地圖上抹除 [...]

我們美國商人認為台北比紐約好千萬倍，而你們XX的中國人卻認為美國是XX的天堂. (3:135)

Mr. Morgenthau's insulting comment infuriates Zhan Yihong and Liu Xiaoling and drives them to rebel. Zhan resigns his job to express his protest. He even requests a serious apology from Mr. Morgenthau—"an apology such as one would expect from the citizen of a great democratic republic" 像一個來自偉大的民主共和國的公民那樣地道歉 (3:136). Liu Xiaoling also expresses her anger by replying to Mr. Morgenthau, "I don't think the United States is a paradise." At the end she chooses to elope with Zhan Yihong to the Taiwan countryside rather than go to America, as she had originally planned. Compared to the character Lin Dewang 林德旺 in "The All-incorporating Business God" 萬商帝君 that we have discussed in chapter three, who becomes insane at the end because of the unbearable pressure that he faces in the transnational company Moffitt & Moore International, Zhan Yihong and Liu Xiaoling are more courageous and rebellious in the face of the Western challenge. They are more determined to cut off the "slave mentality"—the pathological dependency relationship with America—and re-embrace their own cultural roots.

Apparently, the recurrent images of freight cars rumbling from Taipei to the south also makes Chen Yingzhen's "message" clear. The south represents the hometown of Taiwan, an area that preserves not only the Chinese soil—the land that is not yet "tainted" by the transnational business culture—but also the Chinese national identity. Others will later insist on Taiwanese soil of national identity. The act of going south can be seen as the determination to retain the Chinese cultural roots and resist the Westernization of this tradition. However, the freight cars can also be read as a symbol of alien invasion, since the

freight itself is likely products of Western countries, and the products contained inside the freight can also be Western products. The ambiguity of the freight cars symbol creates room for imagination and adds interest to the somewhat didactic ending of the story.

Another interesting touch in the story which also expresses Chen Yingzhen's cynicism about Westernization is the connotation of the name "S.O.B." This English short form originally stands for "Mr. Solon O. Bowdell," the Director of Finance of the Pacific Division of the Malamud International Company, and also the boss of Mr. Morgenthau. However, sensitive readers might also catch Chen Yingzhen's tricky implication—S.O.B. can also stand for "son of a bitch."

Moral Virtue of *Nian Jiu*:

"Mountain Road"

Seeing the many problems that exist in Western culture, Chen Yingzhen, unlike the May Fourth intellectuals, does not see Westernization as an "almighty god" who can save China from its calamity. From Chen's point of view, Westernization can be beneficial to China, but it can also be destructive, especially in the cultural and moral realm. Unlike many May Fourth intellectuals, Chen Yingzhen does not hold a hostile attitude towards traditional Chinese culture. While many May Fourth intellectuals strongly attacked Chinese culture with a "totalistic iconoclasm" stance in the 1920s, in his stories, Chen Yingzhen expresses his love and positive view of many Chinese moral values.

One of the moral values that Chen Yingzhen strongly advocates is *nian jiu* 念舊 (cherishing old ties). In Lin Yüsheng's analysis of Lu Xun's story "In the Tavern" 在酒樓上, he reveals Lu Xun's conscious commitment to this traditional moral value through the psychological conflict of Lü Weifu in the story (Lin 143-51). Like Lu Xun, Chen Yingzhen

also holds a strong belief in the traditional moral value of *nian jiu*. In his story “Mountain Road” 山路 (1983), *nian jiu* is the central element that characterizes his protagonists.

“Mountain Road” begins with a scene in the hospital, where a woman in her late fifties, named Cai Qianhui 蔡千惠, lies on her sickbed due to a rapid decline of health with an unknown cause. Cai’s brother-in-law Li Guomu 李國木 tries his best to take care of Cai as if she was his mother. In fact, after Li Guomu’s elder brother Li Guokun 李國坤 was caught and executed by the Nationalist government in 1952 because of his subversive political activities, the youthful Cai Qianhui—who claimed to be Li Guokun’s wife—had come to the Li family and devoted herself to serving this poor family for the rest of her life. In order to support this family, she works hard in a mine shaft as a laborer, pushing the coal cart and loading coal in the storehouse, a job which abuses both her body and spirit. After Li Guomu’s mother dies from illness and his father dies from an accident on the job, Cai Qianhui even becomes the main supporter and caretaker of the family. However difficult their life in the past thirty years, Cai persevered. Li Guomu is raised under the tender care of Cai, and becomes a successful accountant.

In a letter written by Cai Qianhui, which is discovered by Li Guomu after Cai dies three months later, Cai states the reason behind all her self-sacrifices:

Each time I felt physically and mentally exhausted, I would remember those who had gone to their death with Guokun Dage, and those, like you, who were shipped off to that distant island where rumor says not one blade of grass grows, and where torture is meted out without end. Every time I bathed and saw my body that was once as youthful as a flower become marred by heavy labor, I thought of Guokun Dage, who had long since fallen in the execution grounds and rotted to dust, and I thought of you suffering life imprisonment,

forgotten by the world, alone and slowly growing old, and my heart would be glad.² (Chen 5:63-64)

每一次心力交瘁的時候，我就想著和國坤大哥同時赴死的人，和像您一樣，被流放到據說是一個寸草不生的離島，去承受永遠沒有終期的苦刑的人們。每次，當我在洗浴時看見自己曾經像花朵一般年輕身體，在日以繼夜的重勞動中枯萎下去，我就想起早已腐爛成一堆枯骨的，仆倒在馬場町的國坤大哥，和在長期監禁中，為世人完全遺忘的，兀自一寸寸枯老下去的您們的體魄，而心甘如飴。(Chen 5:63-64)

The “you” in this letter is a person named Huang Zhenbo 黃貞柏, who shared with the youthful Cai Qianhui and Li Guokun the same dream of building up a bright and peaceful Taiwan in the 1950s, and three of them became very close friends. However, due to the betrayal of Cai Qianhui’s elder brother, Li Guokun is caught and executed by the government, and Huang Zhenbo is put into jail. Indeed, Huang is the real fiancé of Cai Qianhui before he is imprisoned. Cai pretends to be Li’s wife and serves in his family because Li has a poorer family than Huang. She hopes that her self-sacrifice can requite her debts owed to these two friends who touched her life so deeply. More importantly, she hopes that her sacrifice can redeem the wrongdoing of her brother.

What is so striking about this story is Cai Qianhui’s *nian jiu* character. To her, *nian jiu* is not an *optional* or *negligible* virtue, but a *core* belief which governs her behavior and gives meaning to her life. In the past thirty years of hardship, she always remembers the dreams and sufferings of Huang Zhenbo and Li Guokun. To walk in their footsteps and share their sufferings becomes Cai Qianhui’s purpose in life. Although Huang Zhenbo and Li

² The English version of “Mountain Road” is translated by Rosemary Haddon, collected in *Worlds of Modern Chinese Fiction*, p.99-119.

Guokun only exist in her heart, Cai can feel their living presence whenever she feels painful in her toilsome labor day by day. It is this spiritual bondage which gives Cai Qianhui a purpose to live, and gives her an extraordinary strength to face unimaginable difficulties.

As observed by Li Guomu, Cai Qianhui's health suddenly comes to a rapid decline after she reads the news that Huang Zhenbo is released from jail after thirty years of imprisonment. From then on, Cai Qianhui falls into deep depression and loses all her will to live. Neither the doctor nor Li Guomu understands this, but Cai Qianhui's letter to Huang Zhenbo explains it all:

As I think about it, Zhenbo, for the last seven or eight years I have completely forgotten about you and Guokun Dage. My degeneracy has taken me unawares, and now I am stunned.

These last few days, the house, carpet, heater and air conditioner, sofa, color television, stereo, and car that Guomu has built up inch by inch have given me a stabbing sense of shame. [. . .]

Today your release from prison has startled me into awareness. I who have been tamed by the products of capitalism and fed like a domestic fowl recall with horror that forest—a forest of hardship, yet at the same time so filled with life. For the moment, I am awakened, but yet, I am a lamp whose oil is exhausted. (5:64-65)

貞柏桑：這樣的一想，我竟也有七、八年間，完全遺忘了您和國坤大哥。我對於不知不覺間深深地墮落了的自己，感到五體震戰的驚愕。

就這幾天，我突然對於國木一寸寸建立起來的房子、地氈、冷暖氣、沙發、彩色電視、音響和汽車，感到刺心的羞恥。[. . .]

如今，您的出獄，驚醒了我，被資本主義商品馴化、飼養了的、家畜般的我自己，突然因為您的出獄，而驚恐地回想那艱苦、卻充滿著生命的森林。然則驚醒的一刻，卻同時感到自己已經油盡燈滅了。(5:64-65)

In her whole life, Cai Qianhui values the moral virtue of *nian jiu* over all other things. She

serves the Li family for more than thirty years, but she never asks for any reward.

Materialistic compensation is never a consideration in her life. But the release of Huang Zhenbo has suddenly brought her to an awareness of her changes—her gradual attachment to materialistic comforts and detachment from the *nian jiu* passion—in recent years.

Ironically, when the material aspect of Cai Qianhui's life is rapidly improving in recent years due to Li Guomu's flourishing business and the rapid development of Taiwan's economy, the spiritual aspect of her life is rapidly deteriorating. Under the taming power of consumerism, Cai Qianhui gradually forgets her real purpose in life—to follow Huang Zhenbo and Li Guomu's path of suffering and self-sacrifice. But after Cai Qianhui suddenly comes to this awareness, she cannot accept the "sin" that she has committed. To Cai Qianhui, her sin is not found in what is being done, but what is *not* being done. In her moral view, simply *forgetting* Huang Zhenbo and Li Guokun is already an unforgivable sin. A life that dwells in materialistic pleasure of the present but forgets about the old ties from the past—a life without *nian jiu*—is shameful and no longer worth living. Cai Qianhui's serious attitude towards the moral virtue of *nian jiu* once gives her the strength to live a vivid and meaningful life, but it also takes away her energy and willpower when she suddenly discovers that the *nian jiu* passion no longer exists in her.

Besides Cai Qianhui, the character Li Guomu also demonstrates a strong commitment to the virtue of *nian jiu*. While Cai Qianhui's object of *nian jiu* is Huang Zhenbo and Li Guokun, Li Guomu's *nian jiu* passion is directed towards Cai Qianhui herself. To remember Huang Zhenbo and Li Guokun, Cai Qianhui "indulges" herself in sufferings. However, Li Guomu's way of requiting Cai Qianhui's self-sacrifice is to provide her with material comforts and to free her from sufferings.

Li Guomu's *nian jiu* passion can be seen in his loving care for the ailing Cai Qianhui. In order to provide Cai with the best medical care, Li reserves for her the best medical ward in the hospital, and invites two doctors and a professor to cure her illness. But Li Guomu's care for Cai Qianhui also goes beyond these materialistic provision. When visiting Cai, Li Guomu and his wife Yuexiang 月香 always bring her some fish soup, and both of them tries to feed her the soup mouthful after mouthful. Seeing the declining health of Cai without knowing the exact cause of it, Li Guomu cannot help worrying:

Silently, he stood before the coffee table. It was a full thirty years since Lao Dasao had come to the Li family, and of these thirty years, the most difficult were in the past. Yet not once during this time had he seen this sister-in-law, whom he respected more than his natural mother, cry so grievously. He knit his brows and searched for an answer. (5:40)

他靜默地站在茶几前，老大嫂到李家來，足有三十年了。在這三十年裏，最苦的日子，全都過去了，而他卻從來不曾見過化尊敬有過於生身之母的老大嫂，這樣傷痛地哭過。爲了甚麼呢？他深鎖著眉頭，想著。(5:40)

Sitting beside Cai Qianhui's sickbed, Li Guomu recalls his childhood memories in which Cai Qianhui plays a significant role. He remembers how the young girl Cai Qianhui, hauling a little bundle, approached their filthy home on a windy and dry summer morning in 1953. He remembers how Cai told his father that "I've come to your home expecting hardship" 我來你們家，是爲了吃苦的 (5:53). He remembers how Cai begged with tears on his behalf for his father's permission to allowing him to continue his study in high school. He remembers how Cai took him for an exciting coal trolley ride after she is employed as a coal mine worker. Although thirty years have past, Li Guomu never forgets what Cai Qianhui has done for him and his family. His successful career has not deprived him of his *nian jiu* virtue. Being

nurtured under the loving care of a person like Cai Qianhui for thirty years, *nian jiu* appears to be the moral virtue that Li Guomu has unconsciously learnt from her.

Family Values:

“Hometown” and “Returning Home”

Emancipation of the individual from the constraint of propriety was once the ethos that prevailed among the May Fourth youths. As Leo Ou-fan Lee writes, “Love had become an overall symbol of new morality, an easy substitute for the traditional ethos of propriety which was now equated with conformist restraint” (“Literary Trends” 477). The most popular symbol of women’s liberation during the May Fourth period was Nora, the heroine from Ibsen’s play *A Doll’s House*.³ In the final act of the play, Nora, as a liberated woman, slams the door on her backward and restrictive family before she runs away. Justifying their action with the example of Nora, countless young women began to break away from the confines of their families. Under the slogan of “emancipation,” traditional family structure was broken down in China during the May Fourth period.

In respect of this, Chen Yingzhen differs from the May Fourth intellectuals with his strong belief in family values. At different stages of his writing career, Chen probes into the issue of *jia* 家 (family) in various stories. In two of his stories “Hometown” 故鄉 (1960) and “Returning Home” 歸鄉 (1999), Chen portrays the importance of *jia* to Chinese people. He laments that the greatest tragedy for Chinese people in this century is the loss of *jia*. In “Hometown,” Chen depicts this issue from young people’s point of view. To the young people in modern society, the physical presence of *jia* does not necessarily give them a real

³ Ibsen was introduced to China by Hu Shi 胡適, who translated Ibsen’s play *A Doll’s House* in 1918 (Lee,

sense of *jia* due to the disruption of family relationships. In "Returning Home," Chen captures this theme from the elder's perspective. To many old people in China who lived through the war years, the loss of *jia* is in no way an abstract experience. Physical separation from family for a long period of time due to wars was a very common experience among the older generation. In these two stories, Chen expresses his deep anxiety about the destruction of the *jia* system in Chinese culture, which always becomes the root of pain for both young and old people.

In "Hometown," the protagonist (the narrator) originally has a rich and warm family. His father is a successful businessman and a caring person. His elder brother, a devout Christian returning home from his studies in Japan, devotes his life to serving the church and the poor who work in the regional coal factories. The protagonist, in his junior school years, is proud to have such a father and brother, and he sees them as his heroes. However, a big change occurs to this family when the protagonist enters high school. His father's business fails. Unable to face such a setback in life, his father dies from depression and illness. The family gives away all its money and property in order to pay the debts of the father. From then on, the elder brother's character also changes greatly. Once, he strongly hits the face of the protagonist because he is unable to control his bad temper. The protagonist runs away from this family and finds shelter in his grandmother's place. Two years later, the protagonist, for the first time, visits his elder brother's home again. But he sadly finds that his elder brother has opened a gambling house and has married a prostitute. After that visit, the protagonist enters university and never visits his brother again. Four years later, the protagonist graduates from university and uses up all his money, so he decides to go back home to see his brother

again, though with much reluctance.

As the protagonist tells his story, he expresses his unwillingness to return home by exclaiming the following words a few times in the story, “I do not want to go home. I do not have a home!” 我不回家。我沒有家呀 (1:43-44). The protagonist indeed has a home—his brother’s place—waiting for him to return to, but he still considers himself homeless. The protagonist’s cry of pain indeed speaks of his yearning for *jia*. To the protagonist, *jia* is not only a physical setting. It is not only a geographical place on a map or a physical structure in a town. To him, it is a place where harmonious family relations, parental and brotherly love can be found. But since the death of his father, the protagonist no longer experiences such close relationships in his family. Therefore, he no longer feels that he has a home. He considers himself homeless.

The loss of *jia* not only deprives the protagonist of comfort and love, it also makes him completely disillusioned and disorientated with his life:

I enter the bustling, devilish city [. . .] live a Bohemian style degenerative life.
I grow long hair. I wear a beard. I listen to the melancholic rock and roll music.
I chase after girls.

[. . .]

I wipe my tears with my fingertips. I do not want to go home. I want to leave. I want to lead a vagrant life. (1:43)

我投進了繁華的、惡魔的都市 [. . .] 過起拉丁式的墮落的生活。留著長髮，蓄著鬚，聽著悲愁的搖滾樂，追逐著女子。

[. . .]

我用指頭刮著淚。我不回家，我要走，要流浪。(1:43)

If such a statement was made during the May Fourth period, the protagonist would consider himself a unique person with such a romantic temperament and free spirit like Xu Zhimo 徐

志摩 or Yu Dafu 郁達夫. However, the protagonist here, under the depiction of Chen Yingzhen, seems to consider himself a miserable and degenerative person who has no future or hope. He does not think, in the pattern of most May Fourth youths, that the departure from *jia* is the beginning of a new life. Instead, he finds that his life is coming to a dead end. He loses all his passion for life and sees his attachment to the “devilish” city life as almost a suicidal act. He cries because he feels sorry for himself but finds no way out of his own dilemma. Through the portrayal of such a character, Chen Yingzhen laments for the miserable situation of many urban youths in the modern society of Taiwan—those who have families but are still filled with a strong sense of homelessness because of their disconnected relationship with family members.

In “Returning Home” 歸鄉 (1999), Chen laments the loss of *jia* from the old people’s point of view. Due to the continuous fighting between the Communist and Nationalist parties, the two protagonists in this story, Yang Bin 楊斌 and Lao Zhu 老朱, are both separated from their families for over forty years. “Homelessness” is a real and common experience to them. As veteran soldiers, they both experience the extreme cruelty of war. But among all the pain that they have suffered, no pain is greater than the pain of being an exile. To return home and to see their families again becomes their greatest aspiration in life. This aspiration also becomes their hope and dream, from which they derive strength and energy to face many hardships.

The story is set in a town called Zhuozhen 卓鎮 in Taiwan in 1992. Yang Bin, a man in his mid-sixties, appears as a mysterious stranger in a park and stuns a group of morning exercisers with his excellent *Taiji* Boxing 太極拳 skills. Lao Zhu, also in his

sixties, gets to know Yang Bin as he treats Yang to breakfast in his food stall. The two old men have never met before, but they feel like old friends at their first meeting as they talk about their memories from the Chinese Civil War. Although both of them are veterans from the Nationalist Party, they tell each other a different story about their past experiences.

Lao Zhu is a mainlander who came over to Taiwan with the Nationalist troops in 1945 after Taiwan was recovered from the Japanese. In September 1946, the twenty-two-year-old Lao Zhu returns back to the mainland with his troops to fight the Communists. After the Nationalists were defeated in 1949, Lao Zhu retreats to Taiwan with other Nationalist troops. In the past forty years, Lao Zhu is stuck in Taiwan and never gets the chance to visit the mainland again until eight or nine years ago. During that visit, Lao Zhu grievously finds out that his mother, whom he has not seen since 1945, had already passed away in 1956.

Although Yang Bin is also a veteran, he, unlike Lao Zhu, is an ethnic Taiwanese. In 1946, the nineteen-year-old Yang Bin is recruited by the Nationalist army in Taiwan and is later sent along with his troop to the mainland to fight the Communists. However, Yang Bin is unable to return to Taiwan after the Nationalist defeat. He, together with many other Taiwanese Nationalist soldiers, is stuck on the mainland. In the past forty years, he has no choice but stays on the mainland. Being separated from his parents and two brothers in Taiwan for forty six years, Yang Bin finally gets a chance to visit his homeland again—the occasion where this story takes place. During this visit, Yang Bin hears from his nephew Lin Qixian 林啓賢 that his parents and his second younger brother—Qixian's father—had long since died. His first younger brother is still alive and is living in Taiwan. But this brother is very callous about Yang Bin's return because he does not want his growing business to be

thwarted by Yang Bin's Communist background.

While Lao Zhu is an exile in Taiwan, Yang Bin is an exile on the mainland. When they meet, they understand and share each other's feelings of being an exile. To a certain extent, their personalities are very close. Both of them join the Nationalist army in their youth, not because they love politics or love the Nationalist Party, but only because they love their families. Yang Bin tells Lao Zhu that many Taiwanese youths in the late 1940s are attracted to the benefits of joining the Nationalist army—they can get three thousand dollars of settling-in allowance 安家費, free lessons in Mandarin, daily meals, and a governmental position after two or three years' service in the army. However, Yang Bin joins the army for another reason—to free his two younger brothers from army service, so that his first younger brother can take care of his old father and blind mother, and his crippled younger brother can concentrate on his studies (Chen, *Loyalty and Filial Piety Park* 35).

For Lao Zhu, his process of joining the army is indirectly the result of his submission to his mother's will. He tells Yang Bin that he is originally a village boy and knows nothing about the city. His mother always wants him to visit the city so that his vision can be broadened. When the Nationalists invite villagers to see a movie in the city, Lao Zhu follows his mother's will and grasps this chance to go to the city. In the middle of the movie, the Nationalists suddenly turn on the lights and surround the villagers with armed troops. All the villagers, including Lao Zhu, are pressed into joining the Nationalist army.

To Yang Bin, *jia* plays an extremely important role in his way of thinking and living. In his consideration of joining the army, Yang Bin never puts his own desires first. Instead, he considers the well-being of his parents and brothers prior to his own needs. Yang Bin, like many eldest sons in Chinese families, considers himself to be the main supporter of the family,

and he is responsible for taking care of the needs of his family members. Even after he joins the army, his concern for his family never ceases. Every time his crippled brother comes to visit him, he will starve himself and save all his meals for his brother to carry back home. When Yang Bin is away from home on the mainland, he “thinks about his homeland Taiwan and the crippled ‘old third’ each time when the dish ‘frying salted vegetable with pork oil’ is being served in the army kitchen” 每回部隊廚房端出豬油炒鹹菜，就會想起台灣老家，癱腿的老三 (37). During his forty six years of exile on the mainland, he thinks about giving up his life a few times due to the extreme physical and spiritual pain. But he always remembers the kind words behind the unsmiling face of his colleague, battalion commander Zhao 趙營長, who teaches him *Taiji* boxing in the military camp, “You are apart from home for tens and thousands of *li*, wandering in a foreign land [. . .] Be determined to go back home alive and see your father and mother” 你離家千萬里，流落在他鄉 [. . .] 要下決心，活著回家，見爹見娘 (7). Whenever Yang Bin thinks about this encouragement, he will be able to pick up his strength and face hardship again.

The importance of *jia* to Lao Zhu can be seen in the anger and bitterness he expresses whenever he talks about the war. When Lao Zhu recalls his separation from his beloved mother in the movie incident, he furiously rebukes both the Nationalists and the Communists, “That destroyer of the country and killer of people” 這亡國滅種的 (28). Although the incident happened over forty years ago, Lao Zhu admits to Yang Bin that the wound left in his heart is deep and incurable:

“It happened so long ago. I can feel nothing. Only when I become older, I begin to know that there are things which still exist in your heart, and they often eat at your heart” Lao Zhu said. “After parting from my mother, I never

saw her again.” (28)

「事情過去了那麼久。都麻木了。可是等上了歲數了，才知道有些事，其實還住在你心裏頭，時不時，在你胸口咬人。」老朱說，「而我跟我娘那一別，就再沒見過面。」 (28)

In his early years in Taiwan, Lao Zhu still believes that he can see his mother again because the Nationalists promise them that “the first year is to prepare, the second year is to fight back, and the third year is to sweep through” 一年準備、二年反攻、三年掃蕩 (45). But later when Lao Zhu realizes that all these promises are in vain, he losses all his hopes of going back. To

both Lao Zhu and Yang Bin, the destruction of *jia* and the separation between family members remain as the greatest affliction in their lives. Through this story, Chen Yingzhen expresses his deep concern for traditional Chinese family values. Unfortunately, the loss of these values is the greatest tragedy experienced by many Chinese people in this century.

Loyalty to Rulers

“The Village Teacher” & “Loyalty and Filial Piety Park”

In the Confucian tradition, *zhong* 忠 is one of the most celebrated virtues. *Zhong* means “loyal,” specifically in the sense of “being strict with oneself in the matter of duty and holding oneself responsible to a standard in serving one’s superior that one would expect the other to adhere to, if positions were reversed” (Nivison 756). In the past, being loyal to one’s nation state or one’s friends and family members was seen as an indispensable quality for every virtuous person. However, in the history of modern China, this concept was uprooted as a result of totalistic cultural iconoclasm. During the May Fourth period, the emancipation of the individual spirit was intended to free the “romantic” intellectuals from every “bondage” of traditional culture, one of which was the old virtue of *zhong*. When we recall the history of

the “Cultural Revolution” in China between 1966 to 1976, we also hear many stories about betrayal—friends betraying friends, sons betraying fathers, husbands betraying wives, etc. Under the influence of totalistic iconoclasm, loyalty becomes a lost virtue in the Chinese world.

As a novelist, Chen Yingzhen wants to revive this tradition. He strives to renew his reader’s interest in the moral virtue of *zhong* by writing stories about loyal people. Among these stories are “The Village Teacher” 鄉村的教師 (1960) and “Loyalty and Filial Piety Park” 忠孝公園 (2001). However, these two stories are not simply odes to loyalty. On the contrary, they reveal the intricate relationships between loyal subjects and disloyal rulers. The protagonists in these two stories are both loyal to their nation states. They both love their countries and are willing to do everything for the sake of national interest. However, both of them end up living a tragic life. In these two stories, Chen Yingzhen expresses his critical view towards the issue of loyalty—although many Chinese people are loyal to their rulers, their rulers are not always loyal to them.

In “The Village Teacher,” the protagonist Wu Jinxiang 吳錦翔 returns to his rural home in Taiwan in 1946 after five years of military service for the Japanese army in Borneo in the South Pacific. Upon his return, Wu Jinxiang takes up a teaching position in a village primary school, which has less than twenty students. Wu is enthusiastic with his job and his new life in Taiwan because he has a positive outlook for the future. He tells himself that “This is our own country, our own people. At least the oppression from officials is forever impossible now. There is hope for reform. Everything will be improved” 這是我們自己國家，自己的同胞。至少官憲的壓迫將永遠不可能的了。改革是有希望的，一切都將好轉

(Chen, *Collected Works* 1:28-29). Having lived under Japanese colonial rule all his life, Wu Jinxiang is excited and hopeful with the return of Taiwan to the Chinese motherland. He sees this political transition as an opportunity to rejuvenate China.

Having this dream in mind, Wu Jinxiang makes every effort to prepare himself for the future. The narrator says that “He studies mainland Chinese literature very hard,” 他努力地讀過國內的文學 (1:29). “He reads the map of China, which looks like the begonia leaf, for the whole day. He reads the name of every river, every lofty mountain and every city.” 整日閱讀著「像一葉秋海棠」的中國地圖；讀著每一條河流，每一座山岳，每一個都市的名字 (1:30). “For the first time in his life, he has a burning passion for his motherland” 在他裏面，有一種他平生初次的對於祖國的情熱 (1:28). His first goal of reform is to educate his students about the motherland. Although his students are filthy, naïve and lifeless children from the village, he still loves them. He thinks that “This world will become better one day” 這世界終於有一天變好的，他想 (1:29). His five year war experience is unforgettably tough and painful, but whenever he thinks about the chance of national rejuvenation in the future, he forgets about he own suffering. Japanese colonialism hasn’t deprived Wu Jinxiang of his loyalty to China. As an intellectual, he expresses his loyalty to his motherland through his reform efforts in rural education.

The second half of the story begins with a vague description of a major social change in Taiwan, hinting at the “2/28 Incident” 二二八事件 of 1947,⁴ and Wu Jinxiang’s

⁴ On 28 February 1947, the tension between the mainlanders and native Taiwanese erupted in riots, in which a number of mainlanders were killed or injured. Taiwanese quickly organized throughout the island, demanding reforms from the Nationalist governor, General Chen Yi 陳儀. But Chen carried out a brutal suppression of the

response to this change:

Next year in the beginning of spring, the turmoil within the province and the revolt in China reach this solitary village like an antenna. New passion prevails in this simple but meddlesome rural community again. Everyone is discussing it, or talking loudly about the exaggerated news. Now, teacher Wu Jinxiang gradually feels the chaos and confusion within him. (1:29)

第二年入春的時候，省內的騷動和中國的動亂的觸角，甚至伸到這樣一個寂寞的山村裏來了。新的激情再度流行在簡單而好事的村民社會中。每個人都在談論著，或著喧說著誇大過了的消息。這時候，教師的吳錦翔逐漸的感到自己的內裏的混亂和朦朧的感覺。(1:29)

Seeing the authoritarian rule of the Nationalist government in Taiwan after the “2/28 Incident,” Wu Jinxiang is disappointed and disillusioned. He maintains his loyalty to his motherland throughout the years of hardship, and he expects the ruler of his motherland to do the same to its people. Even when the Japanese government oppressed him because of his anti-Japanese activities, he never bent to its will. He knows that the goal of national rejuvenation cannot be easily attained, but he thinks that at least there will be no more political oppression in the newly recovered Taiwan because the rulers are no longer foreigners, but fellow countrymen of motherland China.

The “2/28 Incident” is a big shock to Wu Jinxiang. To him, this incident is an expression of the country’s disloyalty towards its people. He cannot accept this political reality. He feels sad for his own countrymen whenever he recalls their evil deeds. In his sorrow, he always exclaims to himself: “Such Chinese people!” 這樣的中國人！He “suddenly feels the enormous difficulty of reforming such old, lazy, and arrogant China” 他

Taiwanese, killing thousands, including those who had demonstrated political leadership during the uprising

忽然覺到改革這麼一個年老、懶惰卻又倨傲的中國的無比的困難來 (1:31). The narrator describes how in a few years, when Wu Jinxiang is in his thirties, his patriotism has degenerated. “Now he is just a lazy man with a conscience” 他如今只是一個懶惰的有良心的人 (1:31), and this is “the legacy left behind after the collapse of a lofty goal and lofty ambition” 一個大的理想大的志願崩壞後的遺跡 (1:32).

While Wu Jinxiang's object of loyalty is China, the protagonist in “Loyalty and Filial Piety Park” sees the Japanese empire as his object of loyalty. Lin Biao 林標, an old man in his seventies, was born and raised in colonial Taiwan. When he was nineteen years old, he was enlisted into the Japanese Army to fight against the Americans in the Philippines. After receiving years of kominka education,⁵ Lin Biao, although knowing that he is a Chinese ethnically, sees himself as “a loyal Japanese citizen, a member of the imperial army of great Japan, the strong and holy armor of his majesty the Heavenly Emperor” 忠良的日本國民，大日本皇軍的一員，天皇陛下堅強神聖的盾甲 (Chen, *Loyalty and Filial Piety Park* 147). After Lin Biao joins the Japanese Army, the Japanese military leaders indeed affirm to him and the other Taiwanese Japanese soldiers that they are “worthy members of the imperial army of the great Empire of Japan” 大日本帝國皇軍的、無愧的一員 (147-48).

Lin Biao's absolute loyalty towards the Japanese empire can be seen in his reaction towards Japan's defeat in the Sino-Japanese War. On the battlefield, Lin Biao's army leader

(Clough 830-31).

⁵ Kominka education was a compulsory educational system to “create imperial subjects,” which was established to assimilate colonized subjects into the Japanese national empire. The goal of this system was to create “loyal subjects of the Japanese Empire” by depriving the Taiwanese people of their national identity, pride, culture, language, religion, and customs, and by fostering an emperor-centered view of national history that rationalized

announces that Japan is defeated. However, the narrator says that “almost none of the Taiwanese Japanese soldiers, including Lin Biao, gloated over the defeat of Japan” 包括林標在內的台灣人日本兵卻幾乎沒有一個幸災樂禍的人 (152). The leader goes on announcing that “From now on, you will all become Chinese [. . .] You are all citizens of the victorious nation” 從此，你們都變成中國人了 [. . .] 你們都是戰勝國的國民了 (153). To Lin Biao, however, “the coming of this identity of ‘citizen of the victorious nation’ is for no reason and groundless, which brings no joy and pride of ‘victory’ at all” 而無緣無故、憑空而來的「戰勝國國民」的身份，又一點也不能帶來「勝利」的歡欣和驕傲 (153). On the contrary, this new identity baffles Lin Biao with this question: How does the citizen of a nation suddenly becomes the citizen of another nation in a day? 一國的人究竟要怎樣在一夕間「變成」另一國的人呢 (153) ?

Lin Biao returns to and lives in Taiwan after the war years. In the eighties, an old colleague of Lin Biao organizes an association of veterans 戰友會, and initiates a discussion about claiming the reparation that the Taiwanese ex-Japanese soldiers should have received from the Japanese government. To Lin Biao and the other old soldiers, the core issue of this action is not money, “it is a movement that aims at winning back [their] identity as Japanese citizens, and sons of the Heavenly Emperor” 補償運動，是爭取 [他們] 為日本人、為天皇赤子的運動 (145). Although Taiwan was recovered from the Japanese for over forty years, Lin Biao and his old colleagues still believe in the promises of the Japanese government—that they are worthy soldiers of the great Japanese Empire, and loyal sons of the

Heavenly Emperor. When they gather at a Japanese restaurant for a meeting, they wear their old military uniforms, greet each other in Japanese, and sing the Japanese patriotic song *March of the Naval Vessel* 軍艦進行曲. Upon the arrival of their ex-Japanese troop leader, they immediately line up and pay tribute to him as if he is still their military leader. All the old soldiers are deeply moved by this scene and some of them even weep.

From Lin Biao and the other old soldiers' point of view, the Japanese government is trustworthy, honest, has a very strong sense of duty, and can be held accountable for all its promises. However, Lin Biao and the other soldiers are totally disappointed when their request for postwar reparations is turned down by the Japanese government. The reason is that they had already lost their Japanese nationality since the end of the war, and they are not qualified for such reparations. Lin Biao is told by one of his colleagues that the Japanese are indeed apathetic to their request. When this colleague arrives in Japan for negotiation, he imagines that he will be warmly received and welcomed by Japanese politicians or officials, and will be accepted as lost loyal subjects of the emperor, but this is not the case. Almost all the Japanese that they come across frown at his request. This experience awakens him and Lin Biao to see the truth—that “the Japanese are bloodless and tearless” 日本人無血無眼淚 (159). The story ends with Lin Biao's agonizing cry, “The Japanese cheated me [. . .] Who am I ? Who am I indeed?” 日本人騙了我 [. . .] 我是誰呀？我到底，是誰呀？ (228-29)

As we have seen in Wu Jinxiang's and Lin Biao's stories, loyalty is portrayed by Chen Yingzhen as the most outstanding virtue of these two protagonists. Their patriotism is marked by their absolute faith towards their nation states in spite of time and political changes. However, Chen Yingzhen also invites the reader to rethink the ruler-subject relationships that

have been experienced by loyal Chinese subjects in the past. The saddest truth is that although the Chinese subjects are always loyal, their rulers are not, whether it is the Chinese or the Japanese government.

From the eight stories analyzed in this chapter, we can see that Chen Yingzhen neither totally accepts Western culture nor totally rejects Chinese culture. He recognizes the benefits brought about by Western culture, but he also knows its limitation. Similarly, he is not unaware of the deficiencies of Chinese culture, but he still thinks that many traditional Chinese moral values are treasurable. In this aspect, Chen Yingzhen is completely different from the May Fourth intellectuals. Chen's attitude towards Western and Chinese culture marks a significant change from the May Fourth literary tradition.

Chapter 5

Change Within Continuity: Formal Techniques

Realism was the primary mode of literary expression for May Fourth fiction writers. As noted by Joseph S.M. Lau, “after Lu Xun’s *The Outcry* 吶喊, realism becomes the major trend of modern Chinese fiction” 自魯迅“吶喊”以後，寫實主義一直是中國近代小說的主流 (Lau, “Current and Droplet” 813). The “social realism” or “critical realism” adopted by May Fourth writers was derived from nineteenth-century European realism and was strongly affected by the Russian realist fictions of Tolstoy, Turgeneve, Dostoyevsky and Gorki. Although writing in a realist manner, the May Fourth writers did not only want to make an “objective representation of objective social reality,”¹ they also wanted to “urge their readers to face some realistic problems through their writing” 寫實的作家通過自己的文字要讀者逼視一些現實問題 (Lau, “Current and Droplet” 813).

From C.T. Hsia’s point of view, this “intrusive presence of utilitarian ideals” “precludes the disinterested search for excellence” in modern Chinese literature (Hsia C.T. 499). He comments that the literary quality of modern Chinese literature is “generally mediocre” due to “its preoccupation with ideals, its distracting and overinsistent concern with mankind” (499). There are, of course, some exceptions. For example, Lu Xun’s literary technique is eminent in some of his stories. In his story “*Huaijiu*” 懷舊, he employs a young child as narrator, “deviating for the first time from the traditional authorial omniscience”

¹ René Wellek defines realism as “the objective representation of objective social reality. It claims to be all-inclusive in subject matter and objective in method, even though this objectivity is hardly ever achieved in practice.” (Wellek 252).

(Lonergan 28). Other writer like Zhang Ailing 張愛玲 also experiment with different kinds of narrative techniques in their fiction, making significant contributions to the development of modern Chinese literature.

It is in this literary context that I want to discuss the formal qualities of Chen Yingzhen's fiction. During the Nativist Literary Debate 鄉土文學論戰 that took place in Taiwan in the middle of 1977, Chen Yingzhen, seeing himself as a "Nativist writer" 鄉土文學作家, was involved in many literary debates with the "Modernist writers" 現代派作家. In many of his articles, he asserts that the purpose of Taiwan Nativist literature is to "inherit the Chinese literary tradition of Nationalism, Realism, and "interfering with life" 鄉土文學是在台灣的中國文學繼承了過去中國民族主義的、現實主義的、干涉生活的傳統 (Chen, *Collected Works* 6:51). As a result, Chen Yingzhen's stories, by and large, are dominated by the mode of realism. As discussed in chapter three and four, Chen aims to reflect in his literature the social predicament of Taiwan and also his deep concern with traditional Chinese values. However, close examination of Chen Yingzhen's work leads me to believe that within the continuous framework of social realism, Chen still tries to explore some sophisticated narrative techniques and tries to tell his stories in a distinctive and creative manner. Although Chen Yingzhen himself often emphasizes more the content of his fiction, we should never overlook the aesthetic quality of his stories.

Point of View:

"Poor, Poor Dumb Mouths" & "My First Case"

In his book *Form and Meaning in Fiction*, Norman Friedman expounds the principles of a major concept in narrative technique—"point of view." He sketches out seven

modes of “point of view” which are commonly found in literary works.² In Friedman’s critical view, each of these narrative modes has its own merits. What is truly crucial is the end effect achieved by any particular technique. Friedman writes, “It is necessary, in other words, to relate the choice of point of view to the needs of the plot and its effect rather than simply to an abstract set of prescriptive criteria about objectivity [. . .]” (Friedman 158).

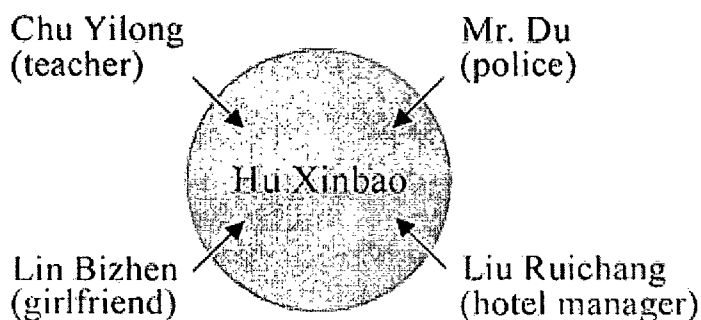
Chen Yingzhen, as a sophisticated storyteller, has the same artistic concern as Friedman. In two of his early stories, “Poor, Poor Dumb Mouths” 淒慘的無言的嘴 (1964) and “My First Case” 第一件差事 (1967), Chen demonstrates his refined narrative technique through a masterly use of point of view. The choice of point of view in each story is not groundless, rather, it is highly related to the nature of the story. The point of view helps to establish a certain kind of end effect which heightens the dramatic impact of the story.

Let us look first at “My First Case.” The protagonist in this story is a thirty-four-year-old dead person called Hu Xinbao 胡心保. His body is discovered in a motel which is located in the countryside. The mysterious death of Hu Xinbao becomes the subject of investigation and also the first case of the twenty-five-year-old policeman Mr. Du 杜先生, who is a fresh graduate from police school. During the whole process of Du’s investigation, he meets three different witnesses who talk about their last encounter with Hu Xinbao. These three witnesses are: the manager of the countryside hotel Liu Ruichang 劉瑞昌, a teacher named Chu Yilong 儲亦龍 and a young lady named Lin Bizhen 林碧珍.

At the outset of the story, the first person narrator—the “I”—in this story is Mr. Du.

² The seven modes are “editorial omniscience,” “neutral omniscience,” “‘I’ as witness,” “‘I’ as protagonist,” “multiple selective omniscience,” “selective omniscience,” and “dramatic mode” (Friedman 145-55).

However, as the story develops, more “I”s evolve. Each of the three witnesses tells Mr. Du about his or her firsthand experience in first person manner. According to Friedman’s principles, the technique employed here is the “‘I’ as witness” point of view. The reader is exposed to the thoughts, feelings, and perceptions of the four witness-narrators, which become the *only* channel of information for the reader to understand the central character Hu Xinbao. As a result, the reader views Hu Xinbao from a “wandering periphery” (Friedman 150), as illustrated in the following diagram:



Chen Yingzhen’s choice of “‘I’ as witness” point of view helps to create the dramatic effect of *suspense*, which is foremost in a mystery and detective story like this one. Each witness-narrator reveals bits and pieces of information about the protagonist, which gradually builds up, and finally resolves the mystery. During the reading process, the reader is invited to put together the information revealed, and to re-create a full picture of the whole story.

To further heighten the impact of suspense in this story, Chen Yingzhen also carefully considers the *order* of the witness-narrator’s appearance. The first witness-narrator who comes into view is the young policeman Mr. Du, who is the most remote person from Hu Xinbao’s world because Du has never met Hu before and has no firsthand information about

Hu. The second witness to appear is the countryside hotel manager Liu Ruichang. Hu Xinbao stays at Liu's hotel until his dead body is discovered in his room. The manager-customer relationship between Liu Ruichang and Hu Xinbao allows them to get into casual conversations, which become Liu Ruichang's major source of information about Hu Xinbao. The third person who comes into view is teacher Chu Yilong. He gets to know Hu Xinbao by playing basketball with him. Although they never met before, they are able to establish friendship by sharing each other's past experiences, especially the sad ones. Finally, Hu Xinbao's secret lover Lin Bizhen tells Mr. Du about her relationship with Hu Xinbao. As we can see, from Mr. Du to Lin Bizhen, the witness-narrator's relationship with Hu Xinbao becomes closer as the story develops.

This arrangement increases the impact of suspense because the information that is available to the reader is less at the beginning. What Mr. Du tells the reader at the outset of the story is that a man named Hu Xinbao is died in a hotel. The next piece of information told by a senior officer is that this is a suicide rather than homicide case (Chen, *Collected Works* 2:120). However, the information gathered by Mr. Du tells the reader that Hu has no reason to die—that Hu has a good occupation and a very pretty wife, that Hu is only in his early thirties and probably leads an easy life. The readers are aroused by a primitive curiosity which compels them to read on in order to discover what really happened to Hu Xinbao.

When Liu Ruichang appears, the reader begins to receive more information about what happens to Hu Xinbao the day before he dies. However much information Liu Ruichang provides, the reader is still unable to comprehend the reason behind Hu Xinbao's death. Instead, Liu Ruichang's reaction to Hu Xinbao makes the reader even more confused. More than once, Liu mentions to Mr. Du about Hu's smile: "You don't know how his smile could

put you so much at ease” 笑得叫人好放心，你不知道 (2:125); “He still smiled faintly, in a way that wouldn’t worry you a bit” 他還是淡淡地笑，笑得你一點都不擔心 (2:126).³ Liu Ruichang’s observation makes the reader think that a man with such a pleasant smile certainly has no reason to die. So why does Hu Xinbao die? More suspense is cleverly created here.

As the third and fourth witness-narrators—teacher Chu Yilong and Hu Xinbao’s secret lover Lin Bizhen—appear in the story, the doubts surrounding Hu Xinbao are gradually resolved. Chu Yilong only met Hu Xinbao once, but he has a long and deep conversation with Hu. He is able to understand Hu’s inner world because of his rich life experience and a background similar to Hu’s. Like Hu Xinbao, Chu Yilong was also born in a rich family and had experienced many ups and downs in life, including the sudden death of his only son two years ago in a car accident. Chu Yilong tells Mr. Du that he fully understands how Hu feels. Chu even explains the reason behind Hu Xinbao’s suicide—his stubbornness in trying to get hold of his glorious past (2:139).

The final witness-narrator Lin Bizhen, being Hu Xinbao’s secret lover, has the closest relationship with Hu. Lin Bizhen says that Hu is a very unhappy man. His unhappiness, from Lin Bizhen’s point of view, is partly due to his failure to gaining the love of a childhood lover Baoyuer 抱月兒 whom he loved very much. Lin even tells Mr. Du that Hu Xinbao married his present wife just because she looks like Baoyuer. Furthermore, Lin Bizhen knows that Hu Xinbao does not love her truly for he always says that their relationship is based on deception (2:147). However, Hu Xinbao keeps this relationship because it gives him a reason to live—he says that he lives in order to make Lin Bizhen live (2:149). From Lin Bizhen’s

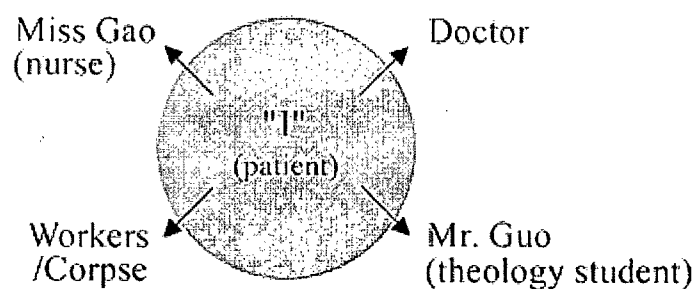
³ The English version of “My First Case” is translated by Cheung Chi-yiu and Dennis T. Hu, collected in

testimony, the pessimistic outlook and the wounded inner-being of Hu Baoxin are fully revealed. The reader no longer feels the absurdity of Hu Xinbao's death.

As we can see in "My First Case," the "'I' as witness" point of view allows the reader to understand the central character through different channels of information given by different witnesses, while the central character remains silent throughout the whole story. As the information is released gradually, the reader's interest is maintained by the effect of suspense. In "Poor, Poor Dumb Mouths," Chen employs the "'I' as protagonist" point of view to tell the story. The "I" is no longer a witness, but the protagonist himself.

The "I" who appears in "Poor, Poor Dumb Mouths" is a young college student who is about to be released from a mental institution where he has been a patient for a year and a half. Three quarters of the story is taken up with the protagonist's account of his feeling towards different people he encounters in the hospital, including his doctor, the theology student Mr. Guo 郭先生 and the nurse Miss Gao 高小姐. The last section of the story portrays the people whom the protagonist encounters on the street when he takes a walk. They include a group of laborers and the corpse of a young prostitute who has just been murdered.

While the central figure in the "'I' as witness" mode is *being looked at* from the witnesses' point of view, the protagonist in "'I' as protagonist" mode *looks at* the people surrounding him. The protagonist-narrator, in Friedman's words, "is limited almost entirely to his own thoughts, feelings, and perceptions [. . .] the angle of view is that of the fixed center" (Friedman 152). The following diagram illustrates the concept:



The question now under examination is: why does Chen Yingzhen employ the “I” as protagonist” point of view in “Poor, Poor Dumb Mouth”? What kind of end effect does Chen wish to achieve? How does it relate to the nature or the theme of the story?

While *suspense* is the main effect created by the “I” as witness” point of view in “My First Case,” *irony* is the most distinctive dramatic effect created by the “I” as protagonist” point of view in “Poor, Poor Dumb Mouths.” At the outset of the story, the reader is being told that the protagonist “I” is a mental ill patient. The reader expects the protagonist to behave or think in certain “abnormal” ways. However, as the protagonist reveals his inner world to the reader in first person manner, nothing really “abnormal” is being uncovered in his thoughts, feelings, and perception towards the people surrounding him, except that the protagonist enjoys speaking to himself more than speaking to other people.

In many places in the story, the protagonist reveals himself as a clear-minded person who is capable of making moral judgements. For example, when his doctor smokes in front of him in one of their meetings, the protagonist says to himself, “A doctor who smokes in front of a patient who is not allowed to smoke is a person without moral integrity” 在被禁了菸的病人面前抽菸的醫生，簡直是個不道德的人 (1:153). From the protagonist’s point of view, the doctor is a cold and arrogant person, just like many other young doctors (1:153). The

theology student Mr. Guo, from the protagonist's point of view, is also hypocritical. During one of their conversations, the protagonist feels that Mr. Guo is not so truthful to him. The protagonist shows no sign of uneasiness during that meeting. He just listens carefully to Mr. Guo and talks to him politely. However, immediately after the meeting, the protagonist tells himself: "eighty percent of what Mr. Guo has said to me is not true. That kind of man is always like this [. . .] always reveals unintentionally the male chauvinism which is so shallow that it disgusts people" 郭先生所說的八成不會是真。那一類的男人往往如此 [. . .] 常常流露著膚淺到令人討厭的男性主義 (1:160). The way that the protagonist talks and thinks reveals his sophistication rather than "abnormality." People might see him as an insane person, but his monologue shows that he is indeed an observant and clear-minded person.

Furthermore, the protagonist is also highly sensitive to the outside world. In many places of the story, the protagonist tells the reader about his sensations, whether they are tactile, audio or visual. For example, he remembers that when the nurse Miss Gao wipes away his tears with her handkerchief, the feeling is like a soft hand touching his face (1:155-56). The protagonist also tells the reader that he has good ears, and he remembers the name of the musical piece played by Miss Gao (1:156). In the last part of the story, the protagonist comes across a group of workers on the street. What captures the protagonist's eyes is the muscles of their legs because it reminds him of Roman soldiers. The visual beauty of the human body is something that always fascinates the protagonist.

In this story, Chen Yingzhen cleverly makes use of the "I as protagonist" point of view to create irony. On the one hand, Chen emphasizes that the protagonist is a mental ill patient who has stayed in a mental institution for a while; on the other hand, Chen allows the

protagonist to reveal his inner world to the reader in first person manner. When the reader gradually discovers that the protagonist is not really abnormal but clear-minded and highly sophisticated, some ironic questions are aroused: Who is really “abnormal?” The protagonist or the people of the world surrounding him?

Narrative Gaps:

“A Race of Generals” & “The Sun is Still Shining”

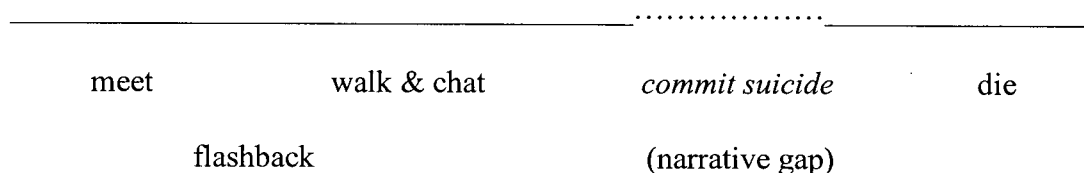
Norman Friedman makes an interesting analysis of “What Makes a Short Story Short?” in his book *Form and Meaning in Fiction*. One of the points that Friedman states in this chapter is that “a story may be short not because its action is inherently small, but rather because the author has chosen in working with an episode or plot to *omit* certain of its parts” (Friedman 181). These narrative gaps, as described by Friedman, “may be at the beginning of the action, somewhere along the line of its development, at the end, or some combination” (181). Friedman uses John Steinbeck’s short story “Flight” as an example to show the proper effect achieved by the story’s narrative gaps. In Chen Yingzhen’s short stories, the same kind of literary device can also be found. Here, I have chosen two of his early short stories for discussion: “A Race of Generals” 將軍族 (1964) and “The Sun is Still Shining” 兀自照耀著的太陽 (1965).⁴ To maximize the vividness of these stories’ effect, Chen Yingzhen chooses to omit certain parts of the whole action and leaves some narrative gaps to inference.⁵ The question now under examination is: how and why does Chen Yingzhen work with these

⁴ “A Race of Generals” has already discussed in chapter three under the theme of the “Mainlander-Taiwanese Relationship.”

⁵ Norman Friedman, a neo-Aristotelian, defines “whole action” as “an action of a certain size—whether a speech, scene, episode, or plot—containing whatever is relevant to bringing the protagonist by probable or necessary

narrative gaps?

Let us look at “A Race of Generals” first. The basic plot of this story is indeed quite simple: One day in December, the two protagonists Triangle Face 三角臉 and Little Skinny Girl 小瘦丫頭兒 meet again in a traditional Taiwanese funerary band again after five years of separation. After they recognize each other, they go for a walk and talk about their recent life. The next day in the morning, their corpses are discovered in a sugarcane field. The real time of this story—from the time that they meet to the time that people discover their corpses—involves less than a day. However, the story is made longer in the telling by the narrator’s bringing in of material from the past in the flashback episodes. The following is a graphic representation of the story’s plot:



The dramatic turn of the story lies in the unexpected death of the two protagonists. However, the part that describes this major change—their decision and process of committing suicide—is omitted, leaving a narrative gap in the middle of the whole action. The original text of this part is as below:

They, then, stand up. (They) walk deep along the dyke. After a short while, he plays the “March of the King.” He is so absorbed in his music that he walks in parade step on the dyke. He sways his body from left to right. She laughs loudly. (She) takes back (her) uniform cap and puts it on. (She) brandishes the silver baton and walks in front of him, also in parade step. The young farmers and village kids in the fields are waving and hailing them. Two or three dogs around

stages from the beginning, through the middle, and on to the end of a given situation” (Friedman 179).

are also barking. When the sun sets, their shadow of happiness begins to disappear along the long dyke.

The next day in the morning, people discover two corpses in the sugarcane field. Both the male and female bodies are dressed in orchestral uniforms. (Their) hands are held together and are placed on their chest. The baton and the small trumpet are placed tidily in front of their legs. They glitter. (The dead bodies) look peaceful and comical. But they also have another kind of funny look that is filled with dignity. (Chen, *Collected Works* 1:151)

他們於是站了起來。沿著坡堤向深處走去。過不一會，他吹起「王者進行曲」，吹得興起，便在堤上踏著正步，左右搖晃。伊大聲地笑著，取回制帽戴上，揮舞著銀色的指揮棒，走在他的前面，也走著正步。年輕的農夫和村童們在田野裏向他們招手，向他們歡呼著。兩三隻的狗，也在四處吠了起來。太陽斜了的時候，他們的歡樂影子在長長的坡堤的那邊消失了。第二天早晨，人們在蔗田裏發現一對屍首。男女都穿著樂隊的制服，雙手都交握於胸前。指揮棒和小喇叭很整齊地放置在腳前，閃閃發光，他們看來安詳、滑稽，卻另有一種滑稽中的威嚴。(Chen, *Collected Works* 1:151-52)

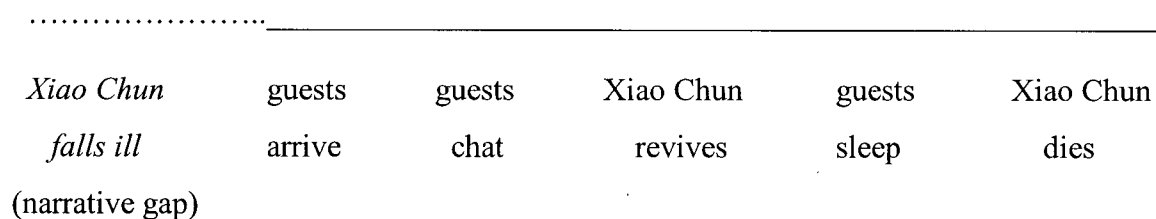
By omitting the portion of the suicidal process, Chen Yingzhen impresses the reader more vividly with the startling contrast between the two scenes before and after death. The former scene is filled with happiness, brightness and hope. The very next scene, however, suddenly turns into a gloomy, quiet and mysterious picture. Without providing any psychological preparation for the reader, the narrator shocks the reader by presenting the abrupt death of the two protagonists right after the long description of the happy scene. By doing this, Chen Yingzhen has successfully built up the expectation of the readers—making them believe that the two protagonists will come together in a happy ending. Chen Yingzhen, then, completely destroys the expectation of his readers by closing the story with a cruel ending. This kind of expectation-building and expectation-destroying process develops and ends so fast that the

readers have no time to ponder upon the story rationally, but they can only respond in an emotional manner. From an artistic point of view, Chen Yingzhen successfully makes a big impact on his readers by skillfully manipulating their emotions at the end of the reading process.

We may also infer further that Chen Yingzhen leaves this narrative gap for another reason—he consciously wants to avoid showing his reader the protagonists acting painfully and weakly during the whole process of suicide. By omitting the intricate process of suicide, Chen Yingzhen concentrates his reader's attention upon the protagonists' dignified and noble character before and after their death. As shown in the above quoted paragraph, the protagonists, before their death, celebrate their togetherness by playing a marching song and walking parade step. When the young farmers and the village kids wave at them, and the dogs bark at them, the two protagonists are glorified like real generals. Although they are people of low social position, they still live with great dignity and joy. Even after their dead bodies are discovered, the two protagonists are still characterized by their nobility. They dress in tidy uniforms with the musical instruments properly placed. They lie down on the ground hand in hand, with a peaceful, comical and dignified look. At the very end of the story, the narrator mentions that two farmers pass by and take a look at the corpses. One of them comments: "Both of them lie in a straight and proper posture, just like two generals" 兩個人躺得直挺挺地，規規矩矩，就像兩位大將軍呢 (1:152) ! And then both of the farmers laugh. This description intentionally draws the reader's attention to the protagonists' noble character. With the presence of the narrative gap, the protagonists' death is dramatized and beautified, and their noble image is maintained to the end.

Chen Yingzhen also uses the literary device of narrative gap in "The Sun is Still

Shining” 兀自照耀著的太陽。However, the narrative gap in this story is placed at the beginning rather than in the middle of its development. The story is set at the home of a middle-class family located in a small Taiwanese town. This family has three members: a Chinese-Japanese couple—doctor Wei 魏醫生 and his Japanese wife Kyôko 京子—and their young daughter Xiao Chun 小淳. Xiao Chun is sick and lies in bed throughout the whole story. Again, like “A Race of Generals,” the basic plot of this story is quite simple: One night, the good friends of doctor Wei and Kyôko come to visit Xiao Chun because her health declines severely. This group of guests include Xiao Chun’s previous private tutor Chen Zhe 陳哲, and another couple Xu Xin 許炘 and Kikuko 菊子. The story portrays the gathering of these five people around the bed of Xiao Chun. As they are waiting for Xiao Chun’s revival, they chat with each other and recall incidents from the past. All of them feel remorseful with the way they lived in the past, especially their extravagant ways of living and their heartlessness towards the poor people in town. They determine to start a new life again if Xiao Chun survives, for it is Xiao Chun’s loving tears for the poor people that inspire them. In the middle of the story, Xiao Chun revives from her coma and talks to them just once. However, the story ends with Xiao Chun’s silent death at sunrise, when five of them all fall asleep beside Xiao Chun. The following is a graphic representation of the plot:



In this story, Chen Yingzhen omits the first part of the whole action—the cause and

process of Xiao Chun's declining health—and gets right into the scene of guest-visiting. Throughout the story, the narrator never tells the reader what kind of illness Xiao Chun has, what she has gone through in her sickbed or what happened that night before Xiao Chun's health suddenly fails. The reader is not informed of all this information. However, this narrative gap does not undermine the impact of this story. On the contrary, the lack of this seemingly useful information helps to establish the story's dramatic impact by establishing Xiao Chun as a *symbolic* character rather than a real person. She, in this story, is a symbol of light and warmth, the sunshine that enlightens a darkened environment.

In a story named “Forever Yin Xueyan” 永遠的尹雪艷 written by another modern Taiwanese writer, Bai Xianyong 白先勇 (Bai 1-22), the same technique is also being employed. In “Forever Yin Xueyan,” the protagonist Yin Xueyan 尹雪艷 is a symbol of China's glorious past rather than a real person.⁶ This point is supported by the evidence found in the text that basically suggests the character Yin Xueyan is unchanging internally and externally over time, which is something impossible for humankind. In “The Sun is Still Shining,” Xiao Chun may be interpreted as a symbolic character because she never feels any physical or mental pain on her sickbed, which is also something impossible for a patient.

While the other characters surrounding Xiao Chun express all sorts of emotion in the story—such as worry, sorrow, anger and remorse—Xiao Chun remains almost silent and calm from the beginning to the end, except the moment when she revives and tells everybody that “I will be alright when dawn comes” 天一亮，我就好了 (Chen, *Collected Works* 2:51). Apart from this positive statement, Xiao Chun expresses no painful or sorrowful feelings.

⁶ This point was made by Professor Michael S. Duke in his modern Chinese literature class.

After encouraging everybody, Xiao Chun sleeps again. What Xiao Chun symbolizes in the story is all the good sides of humanity: love, purity, and passion for other people's suffering. With the omission of the narrative part about Xiao Chun's illness—how she becomes ill and how she struggles with her physical and mental pain—the weak and fragile side of her human nature never appears in front of the reader's eyes. Instead, what the reader sees is Xiao Chun's incredibly peaceful dying process—without any physical pain or mental struggle, Xiao Chun “dies quietly in the even breathing of the five deeply sleeping people and in the presence of the rising sun” 小淳安安靜靜地在五人沉睡的勻息以及在初升的旭輝中斷了氣 (2:54).

The only pain expressed by Xiao Chun in the story is from a past incident—when Xiao Chun sees the dead bodies of some poor miners who have died in an accident in a coal mine, she sheds tears for them. After all, Xiao Chun does not appear like a real human being. Although lying in bed, she never suffers any physical or mental pain. But she suffers from seeing other people suffering. She is more like an angel sent from heaven, giving warmth and peace into this world. It is for this reason—to establish Xiao Chun's symbolic role—that Chen Yingzhen employs the literary device of narrative gap in this story.

Animal Imagery:

“Document” & “One Stray Green Bird”

Imagery is another narrative technique that is most commonly used by Chen Yingzhen in his stories. In this section, I will discuss the use of animal imagery in two of Chen's early short stories—“Document” 文書 (1963) and “One Stray Green Bird” 一綠色之候鳥 (1964). My analysis is centered upon two fundamental questions: What kind of artistic effect does Chen Yingzhen try to achieve through the use of animal imagery in these

two stories? How does Chen's skillful employment of symbolism in these two stories relate to the central theme?

"Document" is a story told by the protagonist himself in first person manner. The protagonist is a veteran soldier from the Mainland who settles in Taiwan as a businessman after the Sino-Japanese War. He starts the story by saying that, "As I remember, I saw *it* the first time when I was ten" 回想起來，第一次看見牠，便是我十歲的那一年 (Chen, *Collected Works* 1:120). The "it" that he talks about is a cat that has pestered him throughout his life. This cat has a "mouse-like" color 鼠色的貓, and it has "ghostly-green" eyes 鬼綠的眼. Since he was ten, the protagonist saw this cat each time that someone died. This cat becomes a ghost-like creature that haunts him throughout his whole life. He does not want to see this cat, but it continues to appear in his life.

The first death that the protagonist witnesses is the suicide of Aunt Fengxin 馮忻嫂, who hangs herself in a hut because the protagonist's elder brother abandons her. The ten-year-old protagonist rushes into the hut with other villagers and sees the dead body of Aunt Fengxin hanging from the ceiling. It is in the darkness of this hut that he sees the cat the very first time in his life. The protagonist sees the cat the second time in his youth, when he becomes a soldier in the Chinese army during the Sino-Japanese War. He kills Fat-man-Guan 關胖子, the commander of his military troop, by shooting him down during a battle with the Japanese. He does this as a way of revenge because Fat-man-Guan has been treating him cruelly in the army. On the night after the protagonist kills Fat-man-Guan, he enters Fat-man-Guan's room and sees the cat staring at him in the darkness.

The protagonist sees the cat again during his early years in Taiwan after he marries a

girl named Zhumei 珠美 from his factory. One day, he comes back home and sees Zhumei embracing this cat in her arms. Zhumei explains that this cat has been raised by her family for many years. In fact, the cat comes to her family the day before her brother dies in prison. As Zhumei tells the protagonist about this dead brother, the protagonist is shocked to discover that Zhumei's brother was indeed executed by him many years ago when he was still a government official in Taiwan. The story ends with a tragedy. One day, the protagonist sees a hallucination: all of the three dead people—Aunt Fengxin, Fat-man-Guan and Zhumei's brother—appear in Zhumei's room while she is sleeping. He is so frightened that he shoots them randomly with a gun. The story ends with Zhumei lying in blood on her bed, with the cat sitting beside her.

The protagonist, throughout the whole story, emphasizes that the cat he sees in different stages of his life is the same cat with the same skin and eye color. This is probably the greatest hint to remind the reader that the cat in this story is not a *real* animal, but only an *imagined* symbol, for it is impossible to have a cat with such long life span. If we consider carefully about the plot, the cat actually contributes very little to its development. Without the cat, the story is still complete. So why does Chen Yingzhen put this imagined symbol in the story? How does this symbol contribute to the artistic quality of the story as a whole?

Maybe we should turn our attention to Chen Yingzhen's treatment of time in the story. The cat symbol is indeed a significant device to connect time, as shown in the following diagram:

childhood—**cat**—adolescence—**cat**—mid-life
past-----present

In each of the three parts of the story, a particular stage of the protagonist's life is

depicted—his childhood, adolescence, and mid-life. In each stage of life, the protagonist encounters different people and experiences something different in life, but he always sees the same cat. The cat that appears in his childhood continues to appear in his adolescence. The cat that appears in his adolescence continues to appear in his mid-life. It seems that amidst the continuously *changing* life cycle, something *unchanged* always exists. It exists in the past. It continues to exist in the present. Its presence always reminds us of the past.

This brings us to the theme of the story. In the story, we see that the protagonist indeed feels quite unhappy with his past, especially those nightmarish experiences relating to death and killing. After he settles in Taiwan, he opens a factory and “continues to seek satisfaction in love that is bought and sold” 我一直在買賣的愛情裏求得滿足 (1:128). He tries hard to indulge himself seeking pleasure, and at the same time he tries hard not to recall the bad memories from the past. However, the cat continues to haunt him. It forces him to face the unhappy experiences in each stage of his life. The protagonist tries to avoid the cat because he does not want to be reminded of his past, but the cat continues to find him. The cat does not let go of him. With the presence of the cat, the protagonist suddenly learns a new lesson in life—the past is not only the past, it continues to exist in the present. The past and the present can never be separated. Memories from the past, although they are bad and sad, can never be forgotten. These bad memories, as represented by the symbol of the cat, never disappear and thus cannot be left behind as if they never existed. They will find you one day even though you try to avoid them. The protagonist realizes this finally, thus he exclaims, “Life is originally just this kind of inseparable entanglement” 生命原來便是這樣地糾纏不開的羈絆呀 (1:132) ! The relationship between the cat and the protagonist is certainly the

best illustration of this “inseparable entanglement.”

In chapter three, we have already discussed the Mainlander-Taiwanese relationship in Chen Yingzhen’s story “One Stray Green Bird” 一綠色之候鳥. Here, I will analyze this story again, but from the angle of the use of symbolism. As we can see from the title, the “green bird” is the core symbol in this story. While the cat in “Document” is an important device in the connection of *time*, the green bird in “One Stray Green Bird” plays a significant role in the development of the *plot*. More importantly, the employment of the green bird symbol, like the cat in “Document,” is also closely related to the central theme of the story.

“One Stray Green Bird” starts with the narrator Mr. Chen 陳先生, a Mainland exile who has become a lecturer in English in a Taiwan university, discovering a green bird lying helplessly injured outside the front door of his house. Chen, unlike his callous wife, sympathizes with the bird and tries to save it. However, the green bird still looks weak and inactive. The next day, Chen talks to his colleague Zhao Ruzhou 趙如舟, also a Mainland exile who is a Professor of English Literature in the same university, about the green bird. Although Zhao is not an expert on birds, he introduces Chen to his friend Ji Shucheng 季叔城, a Professor of Zoology, hoping that Ji will be able to help Chen to save the bird. One day, Chen and his wife pay a visit to Ji Shucheng’s home, and they get to know Ji’s sick wife too. Because of the green bird, the two couples and Zhao Ruzhou become good friends. Chen even gives the green bird to the Ji couple as a gift. However, Ji’s wife later dies from her illness, which is followed by Zhao Ruzhou’s admission to a mental institution and the sudden death of Chen’s wife. On the day that Chen’s wife dies, Ji Shucheng discovers that the green bird disappears mysteriously, with the door of the cage properly locked.

The green bird in this story plays a significant role in plot development. In fact, the whole story is evolved out of the mysterious appearance of the green bird, and it ends with the enigmatic disappearance of the green bird. Although this green bird is as mystical as the cat in "Document," it appears more like a real creature than the cat. The question is: what does the green bird symbolize in this story? How does this symbol relate to the theme?

In the beginning of the story, nobody knows where the green bird comes from, how it is injured and what happens to it before it arrives in Taiwan. But as the story develops, the reader receives more clues about the bird. The first clue comes from Chen's conversation with Zhao Ruzhou about the bird's sound. Chen says, "Apparently, its chirps are nothing special. The sound is the same as other birds. But (when you) listen carefully, its sound is very different. It is a kind of sound that comes from afar, but sounds very familiar" 乍聽起來，它和一般的鳥鳴無甚差異；也只是啾、啾罷了。但細聽又極不同。那是一種很遙遠的、又很熟悉的聲音 (2:6-7). Zhao Ruzhou suddenly becomes emotional as he says, "After more than ten or twenty years, I finally know this call clearly" 十幾二十年來，我才真切的知道這個 call (2:7). The chirps of the green bird sounds familiar to both Chen and Zhao because both of them are exiles from northern China, where the green bird also comes from. To both Chen and Zhao, the chirps of this green bird reminds them of their homeland—a place which they have lost touch with for so many years. The green bird is like an old friend who speaks to them in their home language, and thus once again recalls their memories of homeland. For so many years, Chen and Zhao have lost their passion and goal in life although they both have good jobs in Taiwan. They belong to the "rootless" generation of Mainland exiles who stay in Taiwan but do not feel at home there. However, because of this green bird,

Chen's and Zhao's spirit is awakened again.

In the latter part of the story, Ji Shucheng finally realizes the originality of this green bird. This green bird is a new kind of migratory bird that starts breeding in this century in the very cold area of northern China. Ji estimates that this particular green bird is "an unlucky stray bird" 一個不幸的迷失者 (2:12). He predicts that it will die soon because it will not be able to survive in such a warm climate as Taiwan. From all of the above descriptions, the symbolic implication of the green bird becomes clear. The green bird is indeed an epitome of this group of Mainland exiles—the "unlucky stray ones." The bird comes all the way from northern China to Taiwan just to carry out its mission—to awaken the soul of this group of rootless exiles and to remind them that there is still a home waiting for them in Mainland China.

The death of Ji's wife and Chen's wife, and the mental deterioration of Zhao Ruzhou at the end apparently set a dark tone for the whole story. Ji's prediction that the green bird will die soon in this foreign land seems to suggest that this group of Mainland exiles will also have to suffer in isolation like the green bird. From this angle, Chen Yingzhen seems to hold a negative stance towards the future of the Mainland-Taiwan relationship. However, the strange disappearance of the green bird at the end can be interpreted as a positive touch in the story. The green bird finally has not, as Ji Shucheng predicted in the past, died in Taiwan at the end. Although no one knows how this green bird escapes from the properly locked cage, and where it has gone, the reader at least knows that the bird is not dead. Maybe it is trying hard to make a journey back to its homeland. Chen Yingzhen's positive outlook towards the fate of the Mainlanders is implicitly expressed through the symbolic fate of this stray green bird.

From the above analysis, we can see that Chen Yingzhen has employed at least three types of narrative techniques—point of view, narrative gap and animal imagery—in his fiction. Whether these techniques are being used consciously or unconsciously, they provide ample evidence of the literary genius of Chen Yingzhen. As a faithful follower of the Chinese literary tradition, Chen Yingzhen insists that writers have the responsibility of awakening the social consciousness of the populace, and literature should be a “reflection” of society. In an interview conducted in the early 1980s, he even admits that “what to write is far more important than how to write” 寫甚麼遠比怎麼寫重要得多 (6:14). However, Chen Yingzhen’s particular concern with content does not deprive his work of formal excellence. Within the literary framework of “social realism,” Chen Yingzhen still strives to present his thematic material to the reader in an aesthetically pleasing manner. This effort is especially prominent in the stories written during his early stages before imprisonment in 1968. The six stories discussed above are some of the best examples.

Conclusion:

Chen Yingzhen's Fiction and the May Fourth Literary Tradition

One of the greatest national tragedies in the history of modern China is the separation of Taiwan from Mainland China. From 1895 to 1945, Taiwan underwent fifty years of Japanese colonial rule. After the Japanese retreated from Taiwan at the conclusion of the Second World War, the Nationalist government of China took over Taiwan. The authoritarian rule of the Nationalist government lasted for almost forty years until it put an end to martial law in 1987. For half of a century, people in Taiwan not only suffered from Taiwan's internal political turmoil, but they also experienced the pain of being cut off from its motherland. Since the People's Republic of China was established in 1949, Taiwan continued to exist, until today, under political threat and isolation.

In this historical context, Chen Yingzhen's fiction becomes an interesting subject to be studied. When we read Chen Yingzhen's literary work, the first thing that we should keep in mind is Chen Yingzhen's identity—that he is an *ethnic Taiwanese* writer. Chen was born in a small town in Taiwan, grew up in Taiwan, and lived in Taiwan for most of his life. Despite his Taiwanese background, Chen Yingzhen's fiction displays a strong adherence to the tradition of Chinese literature since the May Fourth era. Although Taiwan was politically separated from the Mainland for decades, and Chen Yingzhen himself was in touch with the Mainland only through the May Fourth literary works reprinted in Taiwan, Chen still holds a strong belief that the cultural roots of Mainland China and Taiwan are the same. The literary work of both areas, from Chen Yingzhen's point of view, should be viewed as “branches of the same river,” a view that was also held by Zhang Wojun 張我軍, the “father” of Taiwanese

New Literature Movement in the 1920s.”¹

It has been my intention in this thesis to show that Chen Yingzhen’s fiction reveals both *continuity* and *change* of the May Fourth literary tradition. On the one hand, his fiction inherits the core spirit of May Fourth literature—its “obsession with China.” On the other hand, his fiction also reveals a change in attitude towards Western and Chinese culture, which departs from the iconoclastic cultural stance of most May Fourth intellectuals. While May Fourth intellectuals had an antitraditionalist spirit, Chen Yingzhen believes that many moral virtues in traditional China are precious human values. Furthermore, Chen Yingzhen’s continual adoption of realism as his writing style is interestingly accompanied by a distinctive use of narrative techniques. His refined storytelling skill distinguishes his work from the “generally mediocre” of the May Fourth period.²

Chen Yingzhen’s fiction, undoubtedly, makes a significant contribution to the history of modern Chinese literature. The significance of Chen’s literary work lies both in its *commitment to* and *transformation of* traditional Chinese culture in a Taiwanese historical context. Chen’s commitment to Chinese culture is exemplified by his persistence in the Chinese humanistic and yet critical spirit which is embodied in his work. Like May Fourth intellectuals, Chen Yingzhen is critical of the problems of his society and his people. In chapter three, I have expounded the four social aspects that most concern Chen Yingzhen: 1) urban and rural changes in Taiwan, 2) the Mainlander-Taiwanese relationship, 3) the political oppression of the Nationalist government, and 4) the influence of the transnational business

¹ Please refer to chapter one for a brief history of the Taiwanese New Literature Movement and Zhang Wojun’s involvement in it.

² C.T. Hsia comments that the aesthetic level of modern Chinese literature is “generally mediocre” (Hsia C.T.

culture in Taiwan. Chen Yingzhen's fiction, as he boldly admits, is his tool to arouse social consciousness. But beneath his piercing criticism is his passionate love for his country and his people. This critical yet humanistic attitude has been the temperament of Chinese intellectuals in the Confucian tradition for centuries. Chen Yingzhen is undoubtedly a successor of this cultural tradition.

However, Chen Yingzhen differs from the May Fourth intellectuals in his attitude towards Western and Chinese culture. During the May Fourth period, many young Chinese intellectuals were "all-out Westernized" 全盤西化. They embraced everything from the West, including its philosophy, literature, and even life style. But they also rejected traditional Chinese culture in a totalistic manner. They believed that the Chinese people and society were "sick" because the whole of Chinese culture is "sick." The only way to cure Chinese society is to replace this "sick" culture with Western culture, which can never be "sick" in the eyes of May Fourth intellectuals. In this aspect, Chen Yingzhen is completely different. He recognizes the positive elements and power of Western culture, and its gigantic influence in Chinese society, especially in Taiwan. But he does not believe that all-out Westernization is a way out for Chinese people because Western culture also has its own deficiencies. Neither does he believe that Chinese culture is of no value. In his fiction, he often expresses his recognition and love for some traditional Chinese values, like *nian jiu* (cherishing old ties 念舊), family values, and loyalty, as I have discussed in chapter four.

If we say that Chen Yingzhen is a *total* inheritor of the May Fourth literary tradition, this is only half right. There is no doubt that his obsession with China is an evidence of his

commitment to this tradition. However, his reception and appreciation of *both* Chinese and Western culture has indeed made a creative transformation of that tradition. After all, China can never be all-out Westernized because of the deep cultural soil that its people have been dwelling in for thousands of years. At the same time, China will never close its door to other cultures, and it will never reject criticism of the deficiencies of its own culture. In Chen Yingzhen's fiction, we see both his love and criticism of Chinese culture.

Chen Yingzhen's commitment to and transformation of the May Fourth literary tradition is prominent not only in the *content* of his fiction, but also in its *form*. In chapter five of this thesis, I have pointed out three distinctive aspects of the formal quality of Chen Yingzhen's fiction. The way he uses point of view, narrative gap and animal imagery to tell his story shows that he is indeed a sophisticated storyteller. Within the framework of realism, the writing style that dominates modern Chinese literature, Chen Yingzhen uses some creative techniques to tell his stories. Although Chen himself often emphasizes the significance of the content rather than the form of his fiction, his stories, especially the early ones, still excel aesthetically.

Not only is Chen Yingzhen's fiction important to the development of modern Chinese literature, but Chen Yingzhen himself is an extraordinary figure worthy of our attention. As an ethnic Taiwanese writer, Chen Yingzhen's heart belongs not only to Taiwan but to the whole of China. His vision of China extends beyond Taiwan, and beyond the world of politics. Throughout the years, Chen Yingzhen has been trying hard to convey a message in his writing: that even though Taiwan and Mainland China are politically diverged and geographically separated, Taiwanese and Mainlanders still share the same Chinese cultural roots. These cultural roots are a common ground for Taiwanese and the Mainlanders to be

united together despite the many political struggles that exist between the two groups.

It is my hope that through this study, Chen Yingzhen's fiction can be properly viewed and assessed from a wider perspective that goes beyond the Taiwan-Mainland political boundary. In an interview conducted in 1983, Chen Yingzhen was asked by the interviewer about his views of the many literary debates that went on in Taiwan in which he was constantly attacked by other writers as a "pro-Communist" writer. Chen Yingzhen replied with a smile, and then he made the following two points:

First, Let us put aside the differences in ideology and philosophy, and write hard to create work of high quality.

Second, I advocate national peace and unity. Literature should unite people instead of creating trouble. (Chen, *Collected Works* 6:17)

第一、把主張、哲學上的不同暫時擺著，讓我們努力寫出好作品。

第二、我主張民族的和平與團結。文學應該使人和睦，不應該製造紛爭。

(Chen, *Collected Works* 6:17)

Chen Yingzhen means what he says. As a creative writer, Chen Yingzhen excels in producing high quality fiction. More importantly, his fiction embodies a vision that crosses the boundary of time and space, and fills in the cultural gap between Taiwan and Mainland China. His fiction speaks to every Chinese—whether Taiwanese or Mainlander—in the same cultural language. However divided the political stand of the Taiwanese and the Mainlanders, they both, nevertheless, share the same cultural roots.

Works Cited

- Bai, Xianyong 白先勇. "Forever Yin Xueyan" 永遠的尹雪艷. In *Taipei People* 台北人. Taipei: Erya Publishing 爾雅出版社, 1983. 1-22.
- Chang, Sung-sheng Yvonne. "Literature in Post-1949 Taiwan, 1950 to 1980s." *Taiwan: A New History*. Ed. Murray A. Rubinstein. New York: Sharpe, 1999. 403-18.
- . "Taiwanese New Literature and the Colonial Context." *Taiwan: A New History*. Ed. Murray A. Rubinstein. New York: Sharpe, 1999. 261-74.
- Chen, Yingzhen 陳映真. "Against Taiwan's 'Orphan Mentality': The Author as His Own Critic." *Modern Chinese Writers: Self-Portrayals*. Ed. Helmut Martin and Jeffrey Kinkley. New York: Sharpe, 1992. 215-22.
- . *Collected Works of Chen Yingzhen (fifteen volumes)* 陳映真作品集 (共十五冊). Taipei: Renjian 人間出版社, 1988.
- . "Imperial Army Betrayed." *Perilous Memories: The Asia-Pacific War(s)*. Ed. T. Fujitani, Geoffrey M. White, and Lisa Yoneyama. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001. 181-198.
- . *Loyalty and Filial Piety Park* 忠孝公園. Taipei: Hongfan 洪範書店, 2001.
- . "Mountain Road" 山路. Trans. Rosemary Haddon. Ed. Michael S. Duke. In *Worlds of Modern Chinese Fiction*. New York: Sharpe, 1991. 99-119.
- . "My Father" 父親. *Renjian Magazine* 人間雜誌.
<<http://www.med.usf.edu/~yyao/digest/daily/012000.htm>>.
- . "My First Case" 第一件差事. Trans. Chi-yiu Cheung and Dennis T. Hu. Ed. Joseph S. M. Lau and Timothy A. Ross. In *Chinese Stories from Taiwan: 1960-1970*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1976. 29-61.
- . "Night Freight" 夜行貨車. Trans. James C. T. Shu. Ed. Joseph S. M. Lau. In *The Unbroken Chain: An Anthology of Taiwan Fiction Since 1926*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 1983. 103-32.
- . "Taiwan's Literary Development in the Last Forty Years" 四十年來的台灣文藝思潮. *Bafang wenyi congkan* 八方文藝叢刊 6(August 1987): 4-36.
- Cheng, Ching-mao. "The Impact of Japanese Literary Trends on Modern Chinese Writers."

- Modern Chinese Literature in the May Fourth Era*. Ed. Merle Goldman. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977. 63-88.
- Chow, Tse-tsung. *The May Fourth Movement: Intellectual Revolution in Modern China*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974.
- Clough, Ralph. "Taiwan Under Nationalist Rule, 1949-1982." *The Cambridge History of China* (Volume 15). Ed. Denis Twitchett and John K. Fairbank. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991. 815-74.
- Friedman, Norman. *Form and Meaning in Fiction*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1975.
- Haddon, Rosemary. "Nativist Fiction in China and Taiwan: A Thematic Survey" Ph.D. Dissertation. University of British Columbia, 1992.
- Hao, Yuxiang 郝譽翔. "Forever Sisyphus: An Interview with Chen Yingzhen" 永遠的薛西弗斯—訪問陳映真. *Lianhe wenxue* 聯合文學 201 (August 2001),
<<http://unitas.udngroup.com.tw/b/200107/storyb1-1.htm>>.
- Huang, Jichi 黃繼持. *Lu Xun, Chen Yingzhen, Zhu Guangqian* 魯迅、陳映真、朱光潛. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Hsia, C.T. *A History of Modern Chinese Fiction* (2nd ed.). New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971.
- Hsia, T.A. "Appendix: Taiwan." *A History of Modern Chinese Fiction* (1st ed.). By C.T. Hsia. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961. 509-529.
- Kinkley, Jeffrey C. "From Oppression to Dependency: Two Stages in the Fiction of Chen Yingzhen." *Modern China* 16.3 (July 1990): 243-68.
- Lamley, Harry J. "Taiwan Under Japanese Rule, 1895-1945: The Vicissitudes of Colonialism." *Taiwan: A New History*. Ed. Murray A. Rubinstein. New York: Sharpe, 1999. 201-60.
- Lau, Joseph S.M. "Current and Droplet—The Two Types of Realist Fiction" 潮流與點滴—寫實小說的兩種類型. *An Anthology of Modern Chinese Novella and Short Fiction II* 中國現代中短篇小說選 (下). Ed. Joseph S. M. Lau and Wai-leung Wong. Hong Kong: Open University of Hong Kong Press, 1994. 813-20.
- . "Echoes of the May Fourth Movement in Hsiang-t'u Fiction." *Mainland China, Taiwan,*

- and *U.S. Policy*. Ed. Hung-mao Tien. Cambridge: Oelgeschlager, Gunn & Hain, 1983. 135-50.
- . "How Much Truth Can a Blade of Grass Carry?" *Journal of Asian Studies* 32.4 (August 1973): 623-38.
- , ed. *The Unbroken Chain: An Anthology of Taiwan Fiction since 1926*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983.
- Lee, Leo Ou-fan. "Literary trends 1: the quest for modernity, 1895-1927." *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 12: Republican China 1912-1949, Part 1*. Ed. John K. Fairbank. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983. 451-504.
- . *The Romantic Generation of Modern Chinese Writers*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973.
- Lin Yü-sheng. *The Crisis of Chinese Consciousness*. Madison: Wisconsin University Press, 1979.
- Lonergan, Ross Edmond. "Tradition and Modernity in the Novellas of Ah Cheng." M.A. Thesis. University of British Columbia, 1976.
- Lu, Xun. "Diary of a Madman" 狂人日記. In *Lu Xun zuopin jinghua (volume 1)* 魯迅作品精華(第一卷). Hong Kong: Joint Publishing 三聯, 1998.
- Miller, Lucien. "Occidentalism and Alterity: Native Self and Foreign Other in Chen Yingzhen and Shusaku Endo." *Chinoperl Papers* 20-22 (1997-99): 197-218.
- Nivison, David Shepherd. "The Classical Philosophical Writings." *The Cambridge History of Ancient China: From the Origins of Civilization to 221 B.C.* Ed. Michael Loewe and Edward L. Shaughnessy. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Prusek, Jaroslav. *The Lyrical and the Epic: Studies of Modern Chinese Literature*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980.
- Schwartz, Benjamin. *In Search of Wealth and Power: Yen Fu and the West*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964.
- Wellek, René. *Concepts of Criticism*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963.
- Xu, Jidun 許極燉. *Taiwan jingdai fazhanshi* 台灣近代發展史 (History of Taiwan's

Contemporary Development). Taipei: Qianwei 前衛, 1996.

Yang, Jane Parish. "The Evolution of the Taiwanese New Literature Movement from 1920 to 1937." Ph.D. Dissertation. University of Wisconsin, 1981.

Ye, Shitao 葉石濤. *Taiwan wenxue shigang* 台灣文學史綱 (A historical outline of Taiwanese literature). Taipei, 1987.

---. *Zouxiang Taiwan wenxue* 走向台灣文學 (Towards Taiwanese literature). Taipei, 1990.